

Ideal
WOMAN
IN
ISLAM

MUHAMMAD IMRAN

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PREFACE

HISTORY bears ample testimony to the fact that the main cause of the downfall of any nation is its wasteful and luxurious living. The nations rise when their members live simple and hard life free from all kinds of ostentation but when they are given to luxuries, the springs of creative energy dry in them and they fall down like a house of cards. The love for fashion especially among women plays an important part in the ruin of any society. The love for ostentation living among women makes them forgetful of their main duties and responsibilities as the guardians of the family and they are drawn to clubs in order to display their fashion and beauty to the people and become a source of attraction for them. This leads to corruption and ultimately corrodes the foundation of society.

Speaking about moral deterioration and spiritual degeneration of latter day Muslims, the Holy Prophet (*Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has truly said:

"You will certainly follow the practices of your predecessors span by span and cubit by cubit so that if they were to enter lizard's hole, you would follow them." He was asked if he meant the Jews and the Christians and he replied, "Who else?" (Bukhari & Muslim)

When we observe the condition of Muslim ladies today with regard to craze for fashion, lack of decency and decorum, we hardly find any difference between the Jewish and Christian women of Europe and America who flood the streets and fill the clubhouses. One has to be

honest and admit that our ladies are increasingly following the tragic path of the women in the West in their misguided approach for self-assertion. If we do not stem this disease at its source, we may be faced with a moral pestilence in a few years. If we stick to our present ways, this society of ours which still has some attachment to Islam and in which we still find some regard for Islamic values like modesty, reverence and charity, will become as westernised and forgetful of its traditions as our richer classes. We will see a time when the husband will not be aware of who is with his wife and *vice versa*. As the things stand today, do we find any trace of the observance of the Holy Qur'anic command for "restraining the eyes" in our society? Isn't the adultery of eye and tongue being openly committed? Are the Muslim women abstaining from the display of fineries and show of decoration and beauty? Are not our women donning transparent or tight fitting attires which are more designed to reveal than to conceal woman's beauty? Do we not see our own sisters, daughters and mothers wearing such dresses as a Muslim woman can only wear before none but her husband? Aren't obscene stories and filthy love-romances freely related and listened to in our society? Do people feel any shame whatsoever in describing their own illicit sex relations before others? The principles of Western immorality have spread like germs of plague and cholera in the atmosphere affecting all and sundry. Obscene and indecent behaviour that made people shudder with disgust a few years back has now become so common that it is regarded as an ordinary everyday affair. Muslim children daily see vulgar pictures in the newspapers, magazines and posters, and are becoming used to indecency. The young and old, including women and children, all go to cinema to enjoy display of indecency, sexual love, rape and murder. Extremely dirty and passion-exciting songs are played in every house

and every shop and none is immune from their sex appeal. Women of the higher classes are going about in semi-nude dresses and people have become so accustomed to these dresses that none considers them indecent and immodest.

Not to speak of others, Islam does not approve that even husband and wife, should expose their shameful parts before each other. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

(i) *"When one of you goes to his wife, he should mind his shameful parts. They should not both strip their clothes off their bodies and become naked like donkeys."* (Ibn Majah)

(ii) *"Mind you, never be naked; for you are being attended by the angels of Allah who never leave you alone except at the time when you have to attend to the call of nature or when you go to your wives. Therefore, you should feel ashamed of them and have regard for them."* (Tirmizi)

Clothes and sex are closely related. That is why Islam has been so vigorously emphasising the necessity of dressing modestly.

With modest dress, the Muslim women are protected from the sexual interest and improper looks and behaviour of men. Obviously it is difficult to really feel modest in an immodest dress, no matter how modest one's feelings and intentions may be! Islam prescribes modest dress not only to protect the society from the disruption produced by illicit sexual interest and relations, and to protect women's dignity, but also in order to neutralise the sexuality of women so that their value is not related to their sexual attribute but to their human and womanly qualities. Thus a woman is valued because of her character and personal attainments, her modesty and dignity, her

role as wife and mother rather than because of her charm, attractiveness or sociability to men; and as she grows older, none of her dignity and respect are diminished because of her loss of youth; in fact, they increase with age.

However, the Western concept of morality that is being diffused through education is disrupting the Islamic institutions. Thus marriage is being regarded as an antiquated custom, fornication as a pastime, free mixing of sexes as commendable, matrimonial duties as an unbearable burden, procreation as a folly, birth-control pills as mania and obedience to husband as a bondage!

The things have come to such a pass that I felt constrained to write this treatise so that it could possibly jolt our women and make them realise that they are sitting on the mouth of a volcano which may erupt any time ruin and destruction. A perusal of this will enable them to choose one of the two alternatives with an open mind: Either they will have to live in accordance with the injunctions of Islam as contained in the Holy Qur'an and Hadis if they want to remain Muslims, or they will have to discard Islam if they are prepared to face those disgraceful results towards which the Western way of life will inevitably lead them.

Although this booklet is intended to be widely read by Muslim women so that they should know their shortcomings and failings in the practical day-to-day life and make necessary amends accordingly before the inevitable comes, the Muslim men can also equally benefit from it and derive knowledge and instructions for reforming their conduct in life. Most of our women are sinful because of the deviation of our men from the path of Islam. If they acquire the true character of a Muslim as outlined in various verses of the Holy Qur'an and exemplified in the life-

example of Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) most of the evils and bad practices at present in vogue in our society will die out of their own. We are commanded in the Holy Qur'an:

"Help ye one another unto righteousness and pious duty. Help not one another unto sin and transgression, but keep our duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is severe in punishment."
(Qur'an 5: 2)

We are also told:

Lo! Allah is with those who keep their duty unto Him and those who are doers of good."
(16: 128)

The high place of honour and distinction that man can attain by virtue of his faith and righteous deeds are also attainable by woman. If a man can become Ibrahim bin Adham, nothing can prevent a woman from becoming Rabi'ah Basri:

- (i) *"And thus does their Lord answer their prayer: Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another."*
(Qur'an, 3:195)

(This expression which recurs in the Holy Qur'an is a reminder to men that women are of the same human status as themselves).

- (ii) *"Lo! Allah wrongeth not (anyone) even of the weight of an atom; and if there is a good deed, He will multiply it, and will bestow out of His grace an immense reward."*
(Qur'an, 4:40)

- (iii) *"And whoso doeth good works, whether of male or female, and he (or she) is a believer, such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged by (as much as would fill) the groove of a date-stone."*

(Qur'an 4 : 124)

I wish my message could reach APWA (All Pakistan Women Association) and other such organisations in the Muslim countries who are enticing women to discard *Hijab* (veil) and take roles in offices and clubs instead of managing the household affairs. Making unmarried girls fashionable and putting their honour to action through organising *Meena Bazars* for raising funds, arranging music and cultural shows and calling mixed conferences of men and women are the chief concerns of such organisations who pose as champions of feminine rights although all their activities are outrageously anti-Islamic. They try to achieve material gains at the cost of moral and spiritual ends. Consequently the women under the evil influence of such organisations are becoming shameless and immodest — they feel uneasy to live a chaste, virtuous and secluded life. So if the women are to be saved from further moral and spiritual deterioration, they should be protected from the disgraceful influences of “modern living”. This is possible only by imparting religious education at an early age — and by inculcating the need of modesty, bashfulness and *Hijab*, and by teaching them to stay in the house instead of visiting cinemas and parks; otherwise the girls due to profane education and contaminated environments will live a life of disgrace and shame for which the parents shall be responsible. The Holy Qur'an warns:

“And guard yourselves against a chastisement which cannot fall exclusively on those of you who are wrong doers and know that Allah is severe in punishment”.

(Qur'an 8: 25)

PRAYER

O Allah! Thy servant, sinner, duffer and nincompoop this writer, is the sweeper of Thy Straight Path; removing the obstacles of ignorance and prejudice about

Islamic injunctions so that travellers on Thy Path shall not suffer predicament. O my Sustainer! By Thy Honour and Greatness, calling to Thy Path is better than the monarchy of the world. To those who believe in the truth and rightfulness of Islam and are its staunch supporters, this writing will be a cause of stability and further insight into their belief, and to those who entertain doubts and suspicions about the position of honour and dignity conferred on women by Islam, it will be a cause of enlightenment and relief, and to those who are misled by the traps laid by the evil forces, it will serve the purpose of opening a new vista of Faith before them.

"We have detailed our revelations for a people who take heed."
(Qur'an 6: 127)

Creator of the heaven and the earth, Thou art my Patron in this life and the Hereafter. Give me death in Thy Path and join me with the righteous!

Lastly, I am indebted to Dr. Muhammad Abdul Wahid of New York, a dedicated Islamic worker — who persuaded me to scrutinise the manuscript in regard to the authenticity of some of the *ahadis* quoted therein and to re-arrange the contents of the booklet in a suitable manner so that it may become more useful and worthy of presentation. I am grateful to Almighty Allah that I have been able to do the needful in this regard after enormous struggle and a revised and enlarged version of the book is now being published. May Allah accept their labour, love and sacrifice in the cause of righteousness. Ameen!

MUHAMMAD IMRAN

1, Rajab, 1398 H.

CHAPTER I

STATUS OF WOMAN IN ISLAM

THE woman's Liberation Movement in Western world is a result of unceasing frustration, financial, moral and physical insecurity, and the absence of a divinely chalked out way of life. Movements such as these are unnecessary and inconceivable in an Islamic Society. Fourteen centuries ago Islam declared that both man and woman shared the obligation of being true and faithful servants of Allah, and that both would be rewarded by Allah in accordance with their deeds. In Islam a woman enjoys a place of honour and dignity which in a sense may be considered higher than that of man. Islam has laid down rules and laws regarding woman, irrespective of whether she be a mother, daughter, sister or a wife. There are certain duties that man has towards woman and woman towards man.

Unlike other religions of the world, Islam has removed the stigma of "wickedness" and "impurity" which had been placed upon woman. Man and woman, it proclaimed, had both come from the same essence, and therefore, if woman could be said to be wicked, man also should be regarded as such, or if man had a spark of nobility in him, woman also should have it. "Woman", declared the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), "are the twin halves of men". He inculcated respect for women in these words:

"The most precious thing in the world is a virtuous woman."
(Muslim)

He bade his followers to behave most humanely towards their women. An insight into his teachings can be gained from the following *ahadis*:

- (i) *"The perfect among the faithfuls is one whose moral character is the best, and the best among you are those who are kindest to their families."*

(Tirmizi)

- (ii) *"A Muslim must not hate his wife, and if he be displeased with one bad quality in her, then let him be pleased with one that is good in her."*

(Muslim)

The rule is applicable to all cases. We should look to the brighter side of the picture and not to the darker, as no human being is free from defects. So also a believing wife is not devoid of good qualities altogether. In this regard the Holy Qur'an says: *"But consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them, it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good."*

(Qur'an 4: 19)

- (iii) *"One who makes efforts (to help) the widow or a poor person is like a warrior (Mujahid), in the path of Allah, or like one who stands up for prayer in the night and fasts in the day."*

(Bukhari)

In Islam, a widow is permitted to remarry and one who manages the affairs of a widow earns an equal degree of reward as if he is exerting in the path of Allah (*Jihad*) or one who stands up for prayers at night and fasts in the daytime.

- (iv) Sahl bin Sa'd reported the Messenger of Allah having said, *"I and the person who brings up an orphan will be like this"* pointing out (the nearness) of his two fingers — the forefinger and the middle finger.

(Bukhari)

Thus the reward of bringing up an orphan is very

great — the everlasting blissful company of the Holy Prophet himself in the Paradise. But how many of us exert to merit it? The answer may be quite disappointing.

- (2) *"Act kindly towards women, for they were created from a rib and the most crooked part of rib is its top. If you attempt to straighten it, you will break it, if you leave it alone, it will remain crooked: so act kindly towards women."* (Bukhari & Muslim)

Creating from the rib is a metaphorical expression which signifies the stubbornness generally found in the temperament of women and that is due to their physique, psychological set-up of their mind and the nature of the work assigned to them. Women are physically weaker than men, they cannot therefore defend and protect themselves with their physical strength. Nature, by bestowing upon them two qualities, stubbornness and shyness, has equipped them for their own protection and safeguard of their individualities.

That there is a difference between the temperament of man and that of woman is a fact which cannot be denied. Islam has given due regard to it and exhorted the Muslims to treat women kindly and tolerate the incompatibility of temperaments. The rib is bent in its make and not straight, and it serves the purpose best in the state in which it has been created. The same is the case with woman. She has been created with some peculiar qualities of physique and mind. She can, therefore, serve her purpose best in this very state; to straighten her, *i.e.*, to make her work just as man pleases or to make her perfectly compatible with the temperament of her

husband, is not possible in every case. Man should, therefore, treat her with toleration and respect her feelings. Prudence demands this because women are never steadfast to anything and always changing. Sometimes, they will be found pleased and sometimes displeased without any valid justification. This is on account of their natural disposition and constitution. So a wise man should take benefit from them in spite of their shortcomings and weaknesses and guide them with caution, wisdom and attention.

- (vi) *"O young man, those among you who can support a wife should marry, for it restrains eyes from casting (evil glances), and preserves one from immorality; but those who cannot should devote themselves to fasting for it is a means of controlling sexual desire."* (Muslim)

Islam does not believe in the absolute suppression of the sensual side of human nature. The conception of saintly life in Islam is not, therefore, the extermination of all carnal impulses, but to control and keep them within proper limits. Controlling sexual desire by fasting is significant in the sense that it is not the complete eradication of sexual instinct, but a healthy control with the help of a devotional act; thus it is not a suppression of sex, but putting restraint upon it through fear and love of Allah.

- (vii) *"When man has married, he has completed one half of his religion. Then let him fear Allah for the remaining half."* (Baihaqi)

Private parts and belly are the two principal doors of sins. The former is greatly saved by marriage and

latter by lawful provision in life. The Holy Prophet in response to a request for exhortation replied:

"The first thing in a man to cause corruption is his belly, so if anyone is able to eat only what is good, (i.e. lawful) he should do so..." (Bukhari)

(viii) *"Paradise lies under the feet of the mother."* (Nasai)

This means that in order to enter Paradise one will have to please his mother by being obedient, humble, dutiful and well behaved.

Woman in true Islamic conception is a shrine of sanctity in contrast to Christianity where she is regarded as a source of all evil. Under the teachings of Christianity if the first mother brought eternal Hell, in Islam she has opened the door of Paradise.

Islam on the other hand also abhors the present feminine trend in the West which is full of pitfalls. The real worth of a woman is not on account of her showy dress, alluring make-up or half exposed bodily features, rather it consists of modesty, decency, bashfulness and restraining of looks. These are such high qualities which like an armour guard the honour and dignity of a woman. Progress is, therefore, not to be adjudged by the false standards adopted by the women of the West where virginity is laughed at as something terribly old fashioned. Sex and adventure looms large in the mind of young males and females who have thrown overboard all taboos of sexual morality. Women are considered "progressive only if they freely mix up, enchant and fascinate the opposite sex in universities, offices, clubs and public places."

We are witnessing the disastrous consequences in the West where it is hard to find a chaste couple at the

time of marriage. This is the culture and civilisation of the West which the Muslim men and women are foolishly trying to imitate to their utter ruination. The Muslim intelligentsia has been captivated by the rapid advancement of the West in science and technology. But friends! It is wrong to calculate human progress in terms of census charts and large commercial and industrial cities. The progress of humanity does not consist of this material progress. The progress of human race cannot simply be called the progress of humanity. The progress of humanity is to be seen from the moral conduct and character of men.

Those people who truly made morals the aim and purpose of their life, had their lives thoroughly transformed so much so that men made of clay seemed to be creatures of some other world. From their morals and behaviour, they gave such light to the world, which is needed always and every moment in the world. Messengers and Prophets of Allah have a very exalted moral status. The lives of their true followers too are singularly of a bright and brilliant character. In their deeds nobility and sincerity are to be found. The thing which strengthened their patience and perseverance in the way of truth was the cherished example of the Apostle of Allah which they never lost sight of. The aim of life they had adopted had so much magnetism and attraction for them that it was not possible for them to be attracted elsewhere. The immense spirit of fulfilment of duty had become the motivating force of their lives. They were, in short, representative figures of the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

"And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah; and Allah hath compassion on (His) bondsman."

(2: 207)

MARRIAGE IN THE EYES OF ISLAM

ISLAM does not regard marriage as a union between man and woman only for the gratification of sexual lust, but a social contract with wide and varied responsibilities and duties. The reason behind it is that, according to the Divine Faith, a woman is not a plaything in the hand of man, but a spiritual and moral being who is entrusted to him on the sacred pledge to which Allah is made a witness. The wife is, therefore, not meant to provide sensuous pleasure only to the male, but to fully co-operate with him in making the life of the family and ultimately of the whole humanity significantly meaningful.

The Holy Qur'an has in so many verses pointed out the different purposes of marriage. It states:

"And of His signs is that He has created wives for you from yourselves that you might find peace of mind in them, and He put between you love and affection."

(Qur'an 30: 21)

In this verse it has been said that the female is not inferior to the male in the sense that the former is created out of a superior stuff while the latter comes of a base origin. Both man and woman are the progeny of Adam and thus both have the same soul. The purpose of marriage, according to the Holy Qur'an is, therefore, the union of the two souls which are one in essence.

"He it is Who created you from a single soul, and of the same did He make his spouse, that he might find comfort in her."

(Qur'an 7: 189)

"Comfort" implies much more than a mere sexual gratification. It is not too much to say that the whole conception of the matrimonial relation in Islam is charged with spiritual and moral ideas. Through the matrimonial alliance the couple is brought close to each other physically, mentally and emotionally in an atmosphere surcharged with piety.

Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that some of the Companions of Allah's Apostle (may peace be upon him) asked his (the Prophet's) wives about the acts that he performed in private. Someone among them (among his Companions) said: I will not marry women; someone among them said: I will not eat meat; and someone among them said: I will not lie down in bed. He (the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)) praised Allah and glorified Him, and said:

"What has happened to these people that they say so and so, whereas I observe prayer and sleep too; I observe fast and suspend observing them; I marry women also. And he who turns away from my Sunnah, he has no relation with me."

(Muslim)

This *Hadis* gives the sum and substance of the ideal life as envisaged by Islam. According to Islam, life is not a wretched prison or a dark grave, nor is a happy hunting ground where one is absolutely free to hunt whatever one likes, it is life worth living provided one tries to live within proper moral limits. Thus in the ideal life of Islam there is no place for shifting the natural, psychic impulses. Islam's approach to life is not negative which, in simple words, is called self-mortification.

True renunciation is to marry and then remain aloof from attachment of the world.

Islam exhorts its followers to live life with full zest and vigour. In other religions piety lies in denying oneself the relish of life, whereas in Islam piety is attained in throwing oneself resolutely and joyfully in the arms of life, but not be overpowered by its carnal temptations. Islam believes that there is nothing superfluous and nothing evil in human impulses. They are creative forces given to man, provided they are properly made use of.

The monastic life which is considered to be an ideal life according to the wrong concept of religion is not the one required by God, because it makes a man emotionally selfish, much to the neglect of social responsibilities. It hardens the heart and fosters the sense of ingratitude towards those who are bound to the so-called saints by the chords of the earthly ties. Mothers are abandoned; wives are neglected; and children are left alone as beggars to the mercies of the world. The ascetic is concerned with the salvation of his own soul. The serenity of his devotion is considered to be impaired by the discharge of the simplest duties to his family, community and State.

Marriage is an important function of human life and its neglect has been manifested in the following evil results:

1. There has been an increase of sexual intercourse outside the marriage.
2. The protective function of the family has been transferred to police and social organisations.
3. Much of the family recreation has been transferred to the movies, sports, spectacles and most recently to television.
4. The family has ceased to exist as an insurance for aged parents (Vance Packard, *The Sexual Wilderness*, p. 228).

Usman bin Mazun (*Raziallahu Anho*) said, "Messenger of Allah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), grant me permission to become eunuch (as I may not be tempted to commit fornication). Allah's Messenger replied, *"He who makes another eunuch or becomes one himself does not belong to us; fasting serves that purpose among my people."* He then said, *"Grant me permission to lead the wandering life of the devotee."* He replied, *"The wandering life of the devotee among my people is Jihad in Allah's path."* He said, *"Grant me permission to adopt monkery."* He replied, *"Monkery among my people consists of sitting in Mosques, waiting for the time of prayer."*

(Sharh as-Sunna)

Marriage is one of the sacred *Sunnahs* of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and should not be discarded without genuine excuse. Who was much more bashful than the virgins within their head veils once observed:

"Perfume and wives have been made dear to me, and coolness of my eyes has been made in Salat (Prayer)."

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said on another occasion:

"There are four things of the practices of the Prophets! Modesty, use of perfume, teeth-cleaning and marriage."

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"There are three whom it is right for Allah to help, the slave whose master has agreed to let him buy his freedom when he wishes to pay the sum, the one who marries desiring to live a chaste life, and the one who fights in the path of Allah." (Tirmizi, Nasai & Ibn Majah)

Ali (Raziallahu Anho) told how the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"There are three things, Ali, which you must not postpone: prayer when its time comes, a funeral and the marriage of an unmarried woman when she finds one of suitable class (i.e., match according to her rank) for her." (Tirmizi)

Ibn Abbas (Raziallahu Anho), reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"Islam does not allow 'Sarura', i.e., failure to perform Hajj and abstinence from marriage." (Abu Daud)

CRITERION OF MARRIAGE

The Messenger of Allah said:

"When your daughter is sought in marriage by one whom you are pleased with for his religious disposition and character, get herself married to him. If you do not do it, there will be distress in the world and widespread dissension." (Tirmizi)

This *Hadis* means that if someone does not wed her daughter to a pious and good-tempered man who has approached him for her hand and instead looks for some wealthy person, in that event lot of girls as well as boys will be left un-wed which will open the doors of sexual immorality. Consequently there will be widespread fornication in the world.

The episode of the times of Prophet Musa (Moses) (Alaihissalam) should serve as an eye-opener. In the present age too, worldly considerations predominate the minds of people in making a choice for the bridegroom. With the result that lot of bashful virgin girls in several families

grow old and all their hopes of getting married fall on the ground. Driven to the wall, some of them flee away or develop illicit sexual relations, then the whole honour of the parents is shred to pieces. That is why, in selecting a life-partner, preference should always be given to piety. Whatever riches are destined in one's lot, will surely come what may. Many of the girls wedded to the poor people have later rolled in comforts and luxuries. Similarly, many of the girls given in marriage to the princes and millionaires are penniless and dependent on others for their daily bread, not to speak of the ill-treatment meted out to them. As such in our own interest and well being, we should attach more importance to the religious disposition of would-be spouses than to other considerations. And every day experience bears out that the religious-minded people are more attached and devoted to their wives, the other do not accord even 1/10 of that care and affection! Then why ruin the lives of innocent girls for uncertain material gains?

Omar bin al-Khattab and Anas bin Malek (*Raziallahu Anhum*) reported from the Apostle of Allah who said:

"There is written in the Torah — whoso's daughter reaches 12 years and he does not give her in marriage and she commits sin, that sin falls upon him." (Baihaqi)

Ibn Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"The mutual love that develops through Nikah (marriage) between husband and wife has no parallel."

(Ibn Majah)

Marriage engenders love at first for wife, then for children, then for kith and kin, then for the society and ultimately for human race as a whole. The real unit of hu-

man civilisation is the family and there can be no family if there is no marriage. Marriage thus contributes to many-sided progress of a man, physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual. An idle man is turned into an active man, a spendthrift into frugal and the hard-hearted a kind through the blessing of marriage. It is, therefore, a harbinger of new thoughts, ideas, responsibilities and obligations.

Marriage is also a great cure for checking unruly sexual passions and falling to sin and crime. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) once observed: *"Even a man's sexual intercourse (with his wife) is a Sadqa (charity)." The Companions asked: Messenger of Allah, is there reward for him who satisfies his sexual passion among us? He (the Prophet) said: "Tell me, if he were to devote it to something forbidden, would it not be a sin on his part? Similarly, if he were to devote it to something lawful, he should have a reward."* (Muslim)

A virtuous wife is the root of piety and abstinence.

Hazrat 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) says:

"Marry a religious woman, no matter if in looks she may be like a black slave girl!"

Hazrat Abu Amamah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reports that if a Muslim acquires piety and abstinence, it is due to a virtuous wife. If she is given an order, she carries it out; if the husband looks at her, she pleases him; if the husband takes a vow on behalf of the wife, she fulfils his vow. For instance, if the husband says: *"By Allah! My wife does not go to such houses where songs are sung, even though it may be her brother's house."* Then the wife fulfils his swearing and never goes to such a house. And when the husband goes on a journey, she guards her person and the husband's wealth. (Ibn Majah)

Abdullah bin Amr (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"The whole world is a provision, and the best object of benefit of the world is the pious woman." (Muslim)

A virtuous wife is a man's best treasure, according to the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). The object of treasure is to gain comforts, but nothing can give more comfort and solace than a virtuous and chaste wife. She is always a joy to her husband. Besides, a virtuous wife can make her husband and children virtuous. Mother has the greatest share in the formation of character of the children. A virtuous wife centralises love in her husband, thereby keeping him in absolute check from extravagant mode of life. The mother is the queen of the household and unless the queen is pious and virtuous, the inmates cannot be expected to turn out good.

All parents should bear in mind that if they deprive their children of religious education, they will face eternal disaster and torments of hell. Such parents will be asked to explain their conduct on the Day of Judgement as explained in the following *Hadis*:

"Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock." (Bukhari and Muslim)

If the parents impart Islamic education to their children, teach them to obey Allah and His Holy Prophet in the whole course of their lives, direct them to avoid sinful life and lead pure, chaste and restrained life, the parents will be rewarded for each and every good action done by their children in this world. If, on the other hand, the parents fail in their duty, deny their children education based on Qur'an, Hadis, everyday Fiqh and Arabic language, fail to inculcate in them a sense of discrimination between the right and the wrong and allow them to grow

as slaves of their animal passions and baser instincts, the parents will have to face punishment for each and every misdeed of their children. Allah warns:

"O ye who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones."

(Qur'an, 66: 6)

PROCLAMATION OF MARRIAGE

Marriage by itself is proclamation among the public to the effect that two souls have united for procreation and legalising of children and that others have got no right to interfere in the conjugal relations of the married couple. Nevertheless, publicity and proclamation are essential in their own right. If, however, there are no proclamation and no witness, it is nothing but clandestine sexual relations amounting to fornication, even though there is mutual consent. The Qur'an, therefore, says:

"And call to witness, from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men be not (at hand) then a man and two women..."

(2: 282)

So in a contract of marriage, two witnesses at least are essential. The witnesses must be present when the proposal and acceptance are made and consent is given. The witnesses must be free, sane, major and Muslim. Marriage contracted without witnesses becomes void and invalid. The Holy Qur'an says:

"...Seek them with your wealth in honest wedlock and not debauchery."

(4: 24)

And again:

"Live with them in honour, not in fornication, nor taking them as secret concubines."

(5: 5)

For this reason, the proclamation of marriage by a beating of *dafs* (drums), chaste amusement (*i.e.*, innocent songs attended with beating of *daf*), and holding of marriage-feasts have been encouraged by the Holy Prophet.

The Muslims nowadays generally overstep these limits and make parties a conglomeration of all sorts of un-Islamic activities and practices. Music and songs, which highlight immorality and frivolous love and eulogy of un-believers, ways and customs, are a common sight in such gatherings. Dancing to the tune of musical bands is freely indulged in and frequent resort is taken to other corrupt ways which have been banned and deprecated by Islam. It must be noted that indulgence in such vain things and fanfare is not only morally harmful but also economically costlier. We Muslims, as true followers of the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) should guard ourselves against any loophole of corruption.

Abu Omamah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Apostle of Allah said:

"Sell not singing girls, nor buy them, nor train them, and their price is unlawful." And in accordance with it, it was revealed: *"And of mankind is he who payeth for mere pastime of discourse."*

(Ahmad, Ibn Majah & Tirmizi)

He also reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"None raised up his voice with a song but Allah sent for him two devils upon his shoulders who beat his chest with their heels till he stopped."* (Tibrani)

We should, therefore, restrain ourselves from following the evil course on marriage celebrations.

"Such are the limits (imposed by) Allah; and whoso transgresseth verily wrongeth his soul." (Qur'an, 65: 1)

Besides, waste is a deadly sin. The Holy Qur'an says some very harsh things about those who indulge in waste. They are likened into Shaitan's brothers.

How many of us, consciously or unconsciously fall into that category? How many of us belong to that family (of Satan — the outcast)?

The Qur'anic description is most apt and the rebuke more than justified. For consider this a waster is not harming himself alone. He is harming the whole society. Multiply an individual's daily waste by the days of a year and you get what he has thrown away! The waste and extravagance becomes all the more conspicuous and wholesale on the occasion of marriage ceremonies, wedding-feasts and other celebrations. It is high time that we put a bridle to our unwieldy *Nafs*, for if this habit (of wasteful expenditure) is allowed to go unchecked, it will plunge us into want and misery sooner than we realise that we are on the way down.

AMOUNT OF MAHR (DOWER)

Dower signifies the giving of something willingly of one's own accord in consideration of the contract of marriage. The payment of dower is enjoined by the Islamic Law merely as a token (of love and regard) which the bridegroom has to pay to his bride enjoins the payment of dower. The Holy Qur'an says:

"And give unto the women (whom ye marry) free gift of their marriage portions; but if they of their own accord remit unto you a-part thereof then you are welcome to absorb it (in your wealth)." (4: 4)

Although dower is an essential part of marriage but the marriage is not invalidated if it is not paid or contracted

before marriage. The Holy Qur'an also says:

"It is not sin for you if you divorce women while yet ye have not touched them, nor appointed to them a portion (i.e. dower)." (2: 236)

The Holy Qur'an also says:

"And if you wish to exchange one wife for another and ye have given unto one of them a sum of money (however great), take nothing from it. Would ye take it by way of calumny and open wrong?" (4: 20)

Dower thus is also a great check against husband's possible oppression.

No hard and fast rule has been laid down by the Holy Qur'an about the amount of dower. It is to be adjudged according to the social and financial position of the bridegroom as well as the agreement of the two parties. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Provide for them the rich according to his means and the hard pressed according to his means a fair provision. (This is) a bounden duty for those who do good." (2: 236)

It may consist of anything, even a ring or a bucket of barley or dates. The dower given by the Messenger of Allah to his wives amounted to 500 Dirhams each except Hazrat Umme Habibah which was fixed at 4000 Dirhams. Dowry of the Prophet's daughters (except Hazrat Fatimah Raziallahu Anha) was nearly 500 Dirhams for each. Dowry may be increased or decreased after marriage by mutual consent.

So far as the dower (*Mahr*) or nuptial gift is concerned, it should be clearly borne in mind that it has no relation to the purchase money with which the women are

purchased — the practice that we find in pre-Islamic Arabia and in so many countries and tribes of the modern age. *Mahr* is in fact the token of love that is offered by the bridegroom to the bride while contracting marriage with her.

"The payment of dower," says the author of *Hidaya*, *"is enjoined by the law, merely as a token of respect for the bride but the mention of it is not absolutely essential for the validity of a marriage; and for the same reason, a marriage is also valid, although the man were to engage in the contract on the special condition that there should be no dower."*

Hazrat Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"The greatest blessing in marriage is that of one which gives the least trouble." (Baihaqi)

This is with regard to the amount of dower, clothes and other expenses. We should also solemnise our marriages with simplicity, avoiding pomp and show and wasteful expenditure.

The Holy Qur'an warns:

"And squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness. Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord." (17: 26-27)

Uqba bin Amir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"The most worthy condition which must be fulfilled is that which makes sexual intercourse lawful." (Bukhari & Muslim)

The wife becomes entitled to full dower after consummation, and before consummation only half, or a mere

present in case of separation before marriage. Some people either through ignorance or deliberately do not pay the prescribed dower at all which is a great sin as cohabitation in that case becomes an act of transgression unless the wife willingly foregoes her right.

Considering the financial capability of the bridegroom the amount of *Mahr* (dower money) should be kept light as far as possible. If we are really sincere in following the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), then we should discard the unwholesome customs of the tribe and clan which make contracting of marriage a heavy financial burden besides causing delay in wedding daughters and consequent mental worries. We need to remind those of our relatives and "well-wishers" who urge and agitate in favour of fixing a heavy dower for reasons of family's prestige and glory, the following timely advice and warning rendered by Hazrat Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*), the second caliph:

"Beware! don't make heavy dower of women. Had it been a cause of honour in the world and piety near Allah, the Holy Prophet would have been the first about it. I did not know whether the Holy Prophet married any of his wives and got his daughters married for more than 12 Auqiahs."

(Ahmad, Tirmizi, Abu Daud, Nasai & Ibn Majah)

Twelve (12) *Auqiahs* are equal to nearly 500 Dirhams or Rs. 132/-. Look at this modest sum and the amount we fix nowadays!

The question which we need to ask ourselves: Are our wives and daughters more worthy of respect and honour than the wives and daughters of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)? If the answer is (and surely it should be) in the negative, we should try to emulate the noble ex-

ample set by the Holy Prophet in this regard. We will then see how blessed is that *Nikah* (marriage) and how happy and contented becomes our married life!

May Allah give us the strength to dissociate ourselves from burdensome and profane tribal customs smacking of pride and arrogance, give up false notions of prestige and follow the practice of the Holy Prophet (*Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) down to the last minute detail. Ameen!

IDEAL WIFE IN ISLAM

THE foremost qualification of a bride is as the Holy Qur'an says :

"Marry such women as seen good to you." (4: 3)

It appears therefrom that the bridegroom has to exercise this choice with greatest caution and consideration. The following Hadis is of utmost importance in making the correct choice; otherwise the very purpose of marriage (domestic peace and happiness) is likely to be frustrated:

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"A woman may be married for four reasons: for her property, her status, her beauty and her religion; so try to get one who is religious, and prosperous."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

It is generally the worldly consideration which predominates the mind of man in making a choice for the woman to be contracted for marriage. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) exhorted his followers to make religious piety the first cause of choice of a lady. And there is no denying the fact that if a Muslim acquires piety and abstinence, it is mostly due to a virtuous wife who in the words of Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) again is "the best object of benefit of the world".

The ideal wifeness in Islam is love and affection. According to the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)

woman was not "an organ of the Devil" but *Muhsanah* — a fortress against Shaitan. She is a safeguard against sin and transgression. She is a partner in life for peace and consolation. Allah states in the Holy Qur'an:

- (i) *"And of His signs is this: He created for you helpmates from yourselves that ye might find rest in them, and He ordained between you love and mercy. Lo! herein indeed are portents for folk who reflect."* (30 : 21)
- (ii) *"And Allah hath given you wives of your own kind and hath given you, from your wives, sons and grandsons, and hath made provisions of good things for you."* (16 : 72)
- (iii) *"They (the women) are raiment for you and ye are raiment for them."* (2 : 187)

And who does not know that raiment gives protection and security, charm and beauty, above all, warmth and intimacy — that great attribute of companionship which the Creator of man and woman ordained to subsist between the two?

Islam regards woman spiritually and intellectually equal to man. The only difference it makes is in the realm of physical conditions, and this difference is based on hard facts. The world, therefore, must know and accept the truth that no other faith has given the womanfolk so many rights and has so preserved their honour and chastity as Islam has done. This is made plain in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:

- (i) *"O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. Be careful*

of your duty toward Allah in Whom ye claim (your rights) of one another, and toward the wombs (that bare you). Lo! Allah hath been a Watcher over you." (4: 1)

- (ii) *"Whosoever doeth right, whether male or female and is a believer, him verily We shall quicken with good life, and We shall pay them a recompense in proportion to the best of what they used to do."* (16: 97)

- (iii) *"Lo! Men who surrender unto Allah and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard their modesty, and men who remember Allah much and women who remember — Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward."* (33: 35)

According to a saying of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam):

"Modesty and chastity are parts of faith."

The picture of house wherein the wife is unchaste and impure is horrible to the extreme. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) has spoken of such a wife as the worst calamity in a man's life. In this connection the Holy Qur'an reminds us:

"Vile women are for vile men and vile men for vile women. Good women are for good men, and good men for good women." (24: 26)

A woman is the guardian of her home, she is responsible for the comfort of her husband and children. It is her responsibility to keep the house in order. She should spend wisely. She must ensure that an atmosphere of piety prevails at home to help the moral growth and upbringing of her children. Likewise, she should see to it that no other man enters her home in the absence of her husband. She should guard her chastity.

One of the greatest advantages of marriage is to have children. Having children is one way of multiplying the number of Muslims. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said, the prayers of children profit their parents when the latter are dead. Children, who die before their parents, intercede for them on the Day of Judgement.

The Holy Qur'an defines the role of a Muslim man and woman:

"I have only created jinns and men that they worship Me." (51: 56)

As a wife you should obey husband, nevertheless a woman should not obey her husband if he orders her to do something sinful. Many husbands may frown at this, but obedience to the laws of Allah should be held supreme in all circumstances. Such a problem will not arise if there is mutual love, trust and spiritual relationship.

Once the Prophet's wives complained to him about their poverty. There were many things they did not have, so they complained too much. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) could do nothing about it, so he left them for one month, people thought he was divorcing them.

Then the verse was revealed:

If they wanted the glitter of this world, they could have it... (Qur'an, 33: 28 and 29)

He went to each one of them. Starting with Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*), he asked, "Do you want to be divorced, what is your choice?" Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*) said, "How can I make a choice? Of course not, it is to be with you." And each of his wives said the same. They were not quick to ask for divorce, and were able to overcome many trials. This is the group, best in conduct and behaviour. Their lives are the best example to be followed.

Saūban (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Whichever woman asks her husband for divorce without fault, the fragrance of Paradise is unlawful for her."
(Ahmad & Tirmizi)

The institution of divorce in Islam is a means of dissolving the contract of marriage in abnormal circumstances when the couple finds it impossible to live together in matrimonial bond. Thus divorce is not a passing whim but the result of a settled determination over a length of time. Though the institution of divorce has been kept as a sort of reservation in abnormal circumstances yet the *Shari'ah* condemns its free use in the most emphatic terms.

Ibn Omar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Apostle of Allah said:

"The most detestable of lawful things near Allah is divorce."
(Abu Daud)

Thus, every Muslim — male and female — should try his utmost to avoid it. The men have been exhorted to overlook the faults of the wives and the women have been instructed to seek reconciliation with their husbands, making the maximum sacrifice. But if, in spite of all these efforts, there is no chance of conciliation and they find no

other alternative left for them but separation from each other, then they should not give themselves up to utter disappointment. They must keep this fact in their minds that All Powerful Lord can provide them with better substitutes and can properly meet their needs and requirements, and can adequately provide them with sustenance.

According to the Holy Qur'an:

"Men are the maintainers of women because of what Allah has made some of them excel others." (4: 34)

The superiority of the male in strength, activity and courage saddles upon him the responsibility of maintaining the family and so he enjoys supervisory status in the disposal of its affairs. Thus the precedence of man over woman apart from biological factors is due to his great responsibilities, being the head of the family. This degree of precedence conferred upon man does not in any way give him the right to ill-treat the woman, but it lays heavy responsibilities upon him that he, being stronger, should treat the woman kindly and behave towards her with the tenderly feelings of love and affection and show magnanimity in dealing with her. The idea behind the above quoted Qur'anic expression is that male and female are complementary to each other and if a male enjoys superiority over female, it does not necessarily mean the inferiority of the female, for they both are the inseparable parts of each other.

This precedence has been stated in order to bring home the fact that the option to pronounce divorce or to rescind a provisional divorce rests with the husband. Men have an upper hand in this regard because they contract women in marriage by spending their means and as such the choice to part with their wives rests with them. This right (to divorce) has not been conferred on

woman *, otherwise she would have become very daring and embolden towards her husband. It is deplorable however that in blind pursuit of the West some Muslim countries like Turkey etc. has taken this right from men and gave it to the courts. This misguided step is decidedly against Qur'an and Sunnah. None is authorised to usurp the right from husband and delegate it to the courts. This is morally unjust and intellectually unsound. It can result in nothing else but enactment of shameful family episodes and scandals, the dreadful consequences of which are being witnessed in the West where only a court may decree a divorce after admonishing the parties to patch up relations, but still large numbers of divorces do take place there. In America alone the rate of divorce is 40% — the highest in the world.

* However, the Shar'iah has given women the right of *Khul'a* or separation from husband in abnormal circumstances (i.e., oppression, ill-treatment, mutual discord on account of wife's dislike of husband etc.) by making the same compensation to the husband which has been mutually agreed upon. If husband is adamant because of mischief or selfishness, the woman can approach *Qazi* (Islamic Judge) for legal separation. Qur'anic verse 229 of Surah al-Baqara refers to this. It is our failing that in actual practice we have denied this right to woman, which leads to many heart-burnings and injustices for which the *Shar'iah* is not the least responsible. Even now if we restore this legitimate right of women in societies where they are denied this opportunity, many of our chronic conjugal problems can be solved as pent up grievances give birth to movements in the reverse direction. It should, however, be borne in mind that *Khul'a* is intended for genuine, hard and pressing cases and as such the free use or abuse of this facility is equally condemnable. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has warned:

"Women who withdraw themselves from their husbands and women who persuade their husbands to divorce them for compensation are hypocrites." (Nasai)

The French legists Planiol and Ripert have explicitly emphasised Islam's point of view in regard to divorce in these words: "Divorce is a mischief. However, it is measure that cannot be avoided for the welfare of the community, because it is the only remedy for another harm, which may be more dangerous. The prohibition of divorce, whatever harm it may imply, is like the prohibition of surgery, because the surgeon is compelled to amputate some of the limbs of the patient's body. However, there is no danger, whatsoever, in legislating for divorce (in accordance with the practice established by Islam) since it is not divorce that spoils married life and dissolves its sacred tie, but the misunderstanding that arises between the married couple and hinders the strengthening of this (union by marriage) and demolishes it. Divorce alone puts an end to the hatred that may occur between the husband and his wife before it is aggravated and becomes an intolerable mischief to society" (quoted by Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, *Islam, Religious, Political, Social and Economic Study*, p.274).

DUTIES OF HUSBAND

The Qur'an devotes Surah (chapter) entitled *An-Nisa* (the Women) depicting mutual rights and obligations of men and women. It says:

"Consort with them in kindness, for if ye hate them, it may happen that ye hate a thing wherein Allah hath placed much good." (4: 19)

A husband should not hate his wife for one bad trait in her, as there may be other good qualities in her as well. A husband should try to make some off-time enjoyments and sports with his wife as this strengthens the nuptial knot more firmly.

Hazrat Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported:

I was playing in the pavilion in the presence of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) and I had some companions who were also playing with me. When the Messenger of Allah came in, we stopped it. He sent them to me and they played with me. (Bukhari)

Wives should be allowed sometimes to mix with their friends and companions for purposes of recreation. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) allowed it in case of Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*). Husbands should also participate with their wives in their innocent sports.

Hazrat Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported that she accompanied the Messenger of Allah in a journey. She said: I had a race with him and overcame him (by running) on my feet. When I became fleshy, I had a race with him, and he overcame me. He said: This is because of that race. (Abu Daud)

Mark how the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) played with his wife at times in order to give her comforts and enjoyments. This example should be followed by all Muslims.

Hazrat Hakim bin Muawiyah (*Raziallahu Anho*) from his father reported:

I asked: O Messenger of Allah! What right has the wife of one of us got over him? He said: It is that you shall give her food when you have taken your food, that you shall clothe her when you have clothed yourself, that you shall not slap her on the face, nor revile (her), nor leave (her) alone except within the house. (Abu Daud)

Here are some of the duties of the husband towards his wife. What greater and nobler teachings can be expected regarding mutual duties and obligation?

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"The most perfect of the believers in faith is he who is the best of them in conduct, and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives." (Tirmizi)

Hazrat Jaber bin Abdullah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Fear Allah regarding women. Verily you have married them with trust of Allah and made their private parts lawful with the word of Allah. You have got (rights) over them that they entertain nobody to your beds which you dislike. If they do this, give them beating without causing injury. They have got (rights) over you in respect of their food and clothing according to means." (Bukhari)

Goodness towards women is the ever-recurring description of the Qur'an and Hadis. Wife and husband are bound by contracts at the time of marriage according to the laws of Islam. Beyond that, both have got independent rights. The Qur'an says:

"They have right similar to those against them in a just manner." (2: 228)

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported from the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) who said:

"When a man has two wives and he does not deal equitably between them, he will come on the Resurrection Day with a side hanging down."

(Tirmizi, Abu Daud & Nasai)

(The people would understand that he had two wives and he did not discharge the right of one of them).

Love, which is a matter of emotion, is beyond one's control. It is, therefore, too much to expect of a human being that he must observe perfect equity amongst his wives in regard to the sharing of his feelings for them. Allah has not, therefore, burdened His servants with this unbearable burden of maintaining balance between their wives in the case of emotions and feelings. He has saddled upon them a responsibility which they can undertake, viz., they should deal with their wives on the basis of equity and justice as regard their outward behaviour and practical treatment towards them, e.g., sharing days and nights, kindness, and providing them with maintenance.

Abu Bakr Siddiq (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported from the Messenger of Allah who said:

"One who treats badly with those under their authority shall not enter Paradise." (Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)

Those who victimise or misbehave with their servants and subordinates will not enter Paradise in the beginning but they will enter it after expiation of sins. If this is the punishment meted out to the defaults in the above cases, then the lot of those who persecute their wives for minor faults and omissions can be well imagined.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"Woman is like a rib when you attempt to straighten it, you would break it. And if you leave her alone, you would benefit by her, and crookedness will remain in her." (Muslim)

It means if we want to get benefit from our wives, let us not attempt to radically change their modes of thinking and vision because that may end up in divorce. So a wise husband is one who benefits from his wife despite the incompatibility with her temperament.

Laqit bin Sabira told that he said:

Messenger of Allah, I have a wife who utters foul speech. He told him to divorce her, when he replied that he had a son from her and was a companion (for a long time), he said, "Give her a command (meaning give her an exhortation), and if there is any good in her, she will accept it; but do not beat your wife as you would beat your young slave-girl." (Abu Daud)

Umar (Raziallahu Anho) reported the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) as saying:

"A man will not be asked about why he beat his wife."
(Abu Daud & Ibn Majah)

The wisdom of this commandment is manifest from the fact that a great many disputes between the married couples are caused by the intervention of a third person who spreads false reports, slanders and thus adds fuel to their family quarrels. The fact that man is incharge and the maintainer of the woman necessitates that he should have the right to admonish his disobedient wife as the following verse very clearly shows:

"As for those (women) whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, seek not a way against them. Lo! Allah is ever High Exalted, Great."
(Qur'an, 4: 34)

The above verse is very instructive. It also illustrates how penetrating an eye Islam has into the psychology of woman who being proud of her beauty and personal charm at times plays a coquette so much so that virtually it becomes an impudence. As such her separation to a bed apart means that the husband is impervious to her beauty, charm and coquetry. This may deflate a little her

swollen pride and thus bring her back to her senses. But if all these means of correction fail to bring her round, chastisement is the last resort. However, the Islamic Law has laid it down that the chastisement should be of a mild severity.

Chastisement is the last resort. The first is exhortation and persuasion — then suspending the conjugal relations, for a short time, exceeding not more than four months. And if those measures miserably fail, chastisement is allowed. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said:

"Beat your wives if you find it absolutely essential but the good amongst you would never beat them."

(Ahkam-ul-Qur'an, Ibn Arabi)

The learned jurists say that mild beating of wife is allowed in four cases:

1. when she does not wear fineries though wanted by the husband,
2. when she is called for sexual intercourse and she refuses without any lawful excuse,
3. when she is ordered to take bath from impurities for prayer and she refuses, and
4. when she goes abroad without permission of her husband.

This mild beating though allowed was discouraged by the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in practice. At any rate, slap on the face is strictly prohibited.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) advised us to win the hearts of our wives and correct their defects by admonition and good treatment and not by beating; because in the latter case there would be tension, hatred and

strained relations.

Aisha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"The best of you is he who is best to his family, and I am best among you to my family. When one of you dies, speak no ill of him." (Tirmizi & Darimi)

Same reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"Among the believers who show most perfect faith are those who have the best disposition, and are the kindest to their families." (Tirmizi)

A husband should also not cast aspersions on the chastity of his wife on false or flimsy grounds for harassing and ill-treating her. Islam has taken a very serious view of slandering women. If anything is said against a woman's chastity, it would be supported by evidence twice as strong as would ordinarily be required for business transactions, or even in murder cases, that is, four witnesses are required instead of two. Failing such preponderating evidence, the slanderer is himself treated as a wicked transgressor and punished with eighty stripes. Not only would he be subjected to this disgraceful form of punishment, but would be deprived of the citizens' rights of giving evidence in all matters of life, unless he repents and reforms, in which case he can be readmitted as a competent witness. This act of defamation or slandering and making false accusation especially of fornication is known as *Qazaf* in the *Shari'ah*.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported:

"A bedouin came to Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and said: My wife has given birth to a dark-complexioned child and I have disowned him. Thereupon Allah's Apostle (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: Have

you any camels? He said: Yes. He said: What is their colour? He said: They are red. He said: Is there anyone dusky among them? He said: Yes. Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: How has it come about? He said: Messenger of Allah, it is perhaps due to the strain to which it has reverted, whereupon the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: It (the birth of the black child) may be due to the strain to which he (the child) might have reverted. (Bukhari & Muslim)

The colour of the child does not necessarily resemble that of the father. There are so many other factors, physiological, climatic and even psychological which determine the colour of the child.

PROVISION OF DIVORCE

According to Islam, marriage is a civil contract; yet the rights and responsibilities consequent upon it are of such importance to the welfare of humanity that a high degree of sanctity is attached to it. But, in spite of the sacredness of the character of the marriage tie, Islam recognises the necessity of divorce in cases when marital relations are poisoned to a degree which makes a peaceful home life impossible. But Islam does not believe in unlimited opportunities for divorce on frivolous and flimsy grounds, because any undue increase in the facilities for divorce would destroy the stability of family life. Therefore, while allowing divorce even on genuine grounds, Islam has taken great care to introduce checks designed to limit the use of available facilities.

We have already seen that divorce is the most detestable of all things permitted. Islam, therefore, permits it as a last resort, when all efforts of peaceful living between

husband and wife miserably fail. Islam exhorts both the husband and the wife to think a hundred and one times before making the final decision of separation, and it has, therefore, afforded all possible opportunities for reconciliation and provided ample time to reflect calmly over the pros and cons of the matter. The Holy Qur'an has laid down some principles of divorce. The first principle that the divorce should be pronounced in the period of purity when menses are over. The idea behind it is that in this period man is inclined to resume conjugal relations and so far as woman is concerned, she is in a rational frame of mind as menstruation has a disturbing effect on her mind. The Holy Qur'an says:

"O people, when you divorce women, divorce them for their prescribed period." (65: 1)

Then the second point is that the pronouncement of divorce should be spread over three periods (three monthly courses) and then the final decision should be made whether one is prepared to take her back or one has decided to bid her good-bye for ever. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Divorce may be (pronounced) twice, then keep (them) in good fellowship or let (them) go with kindness."

(2: 229)

What it means is that divorce should be pronounced separately in two periods of *Tuhr* (purification). This is to be treated as *Talaq* (revocable divorce) after which the husband has the right to resume conjugal relations. But after the expiry of two periods of temporary separation, the final choice is to be made — either to take her back in love and amity or let her go finally and that too with grace and kindness.

The right of woman in demanding the dissolution of marriage is known as *Khul'a* (meaning, literally, the putting off or taking off a thing). It is a kind of facility provided to the wife in securing *Talaq* (divorce) from her husband by returning a part or full amount of the bridal gift (*Mahr*).

The Holy Qur'an says:

"If a woman feareth ill-treatment from her husband, or desertion, it is no sin for them twain if they make terms of peace between themselves, peace is better, but greed hath been made present in the minds (of men). If ye do good and keep from evil, Lo! Allah is ever informed of what ye do."
(4: 128)

The peculiar Qur'anic verse denotes exhortation. If some reconciliation could be made between husband and wife by forgoing some of the demands on either side, it must be made. The Qur'an, however, stresses that if both the parties honestly feel that it is not possible for them to get on together and there is no help to it, but separation, then it should be done in a kind and graceful manner.

The standard procedure for this separation as already explained is that a man who wants to divorce his wife should pronounce one divorce in the period of purity after the monthly course of his wife, and then in the second period of purity, he should pronounce second divorce. Up to these two divorces, he is permitted to take his wife back, but at the end of third period of purity; the pronouncement of divorce would become irrevocable. It is reported that a Companion of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) once asked him: The Qur'an has spoken of only two divorces, whence comes the third one. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) asked him to take into consideration the words, 'Or send them away with kindness',

meaning thereby that after the first two divorces the husband should honourably retain her or send her away, *i.e.*, divorcing her for a third time.

The husband is required to make full payment of the dower money if he takes the initiative in divorce. Moreover, he is not allowed to take from her anything out of this dower money or other gifts he had given to her. The Holy Qur'an says:

"And it is not lawful for you that ye take from women aught of that which ye have given them; except (in the case) when both fear that they may not be able to keep within the limits (imposed) by Allah. And if ye fear that they may not be able to keep the limits of Allah, in that case it is no sin for either of them if the woman ransom herself. These are the limits (imposed) by Allah. Transgress then not. For whoso transgresseth Allah's limits: such are wrongdoers." (2: 229)

If the demand for separation is initiated by the wife, (as is the case set out in the last portion of the above verse), then she is required to return the dower which she received from her husband at the time of marriage; and in this payment there shall be no blame on either of them. This is known as *khul'a*. The scholars of Islam have, on the basis of the plural form of the verb as *khaftam* instead of the pair form as used before and after this in this part of the verse, concluded that the wife can get *khul'a* only through the *Qazi* or judge or through those who are authorised to administer justice.

According to the Hanafis, a woman is entitled to get, without the decision of the *Qazi*, *khul'a* in case the husband and the wife agree, but if the husband refuses, then the woman has to go to the court for seeking separation through *khul'a*.

The case of Jamila bint 'Abdullah, who was the wife of Sabit bin Qays provides a good illustration of *khul'a*. She came to the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and demanded a divorce from her husband on the ground that she had no liking for him, in spite of his good conduct and behaviour. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) granted her *khul'a* on the condition that she should return to Sabit the garden which he had given her as dower (*Mahr*) at the time of their marriage.

(Bukhari, Nasai, Ibn Majah on the authority of Hazrat Ibn 'Abbas)

Similar Ahadis have been transmitted on the authority of Hazrat Aisha (*Raziallahu Anha*) relating to the *khul'a* of a woman called Hubaybah bint Sahl, and are found in Muwatta' Imam Malik and Musnad of Ahmad.

It should also be borne in mind that *khul'a* is an irrevocable separation and thus it is absolute and final. The woman marries another person and not her previous husband at the expiry of her *'Iddat* (period of waiting). This principle has been laid down so that the people may divorce their wives after carefully taking into consideration its repercussions and not take it lightly. They should keep this thing before their minds that after the final separation the chances of remarriage are very few and far between. The only chance left is that the husband dies or the second marriage proves failure and the second husband, out of his own will, and not under any pressure, divorces his wife. Shah Waliullah, while explaining the significance of this injunction, has stated that the idea behind this command is that the people should not take the institutions of marriage and divorce as mere playthings. They should be fully aware of their responsibilities and obligations.

The tone of the subsequent verse 230 of *Surah Al-Baqara* does not approve the shameful custom known as

halalah, (temporary marriage), gone through with no other object but to legalise the divorced wife for the first husband. There must be genuine marriage — determination to unite as husband and wife as long as they live.

The Holy Prophet has condemned this type of marriage. It is reported on the authority of Ibn Mas'ud that Allah's Messenger, (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) invoked curse upon those who resort to such practices.

(Tirmizi)

It should also be noted that marriage with another husband includes not only matrimonial contract but also sexual intercourse between them. The husband should therefore think a hundred times before making the final decision as divorce is not a fun but something very serious, and thus no one is allowed to ruin conjugal relations in a fit of rage. That is why the Holy Prophet time and again warned us not to become angry as "*anger spoils faith as aloe spoils honey*." (Baihaqi) Again he said:

"If one restrains his anger, Allah will keep his punishment from him on the Day of Resurrection."

(Baihaqi)

Abu Hurairah reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"The strong man is not the good wrestler; the strong man is only he who controls himself when he is angry."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"No one has swallowed back anything more excellent in the sight of Allah Who is Great and Glorious than anger he restrains seeking to please Allah Most High."

(Ahmad)

Abu Zarr (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"Anger comes from the devil, the devil was created of fire and fire is extinguished only with water; so when one of you becomes angry, he should perform ablution." (Abu Daud)

May Allah enable us not to be carried by our passions and be kind and just to our wives as ordained by Allah and His Apostle. Ameen!

"And obey Allah and the Messenger that ye may find mercy. And vie with one another for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who ward off (evil), those who spend (of that which Allah hath given them) in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving towards mankind; Allah loveth the good; And those who, when they do an evil thing or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins. Who forgiveth sins save Allah only? And will not knowingly repeat (the wrong) they did. The reward of such will be forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide for ever — a bountiful reward for workers!" (Qur'an, 3: 133-136)

HUSBAND-WIFE SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

In Islam the union of the sexes has been purified and the joy of the married relations secured by the absolute prohibition of every kind of extra-matrimonial connection. The Holy Qur'an stresses upon the people to marry as it is the most effective means whereby one can lead a virtuous life free from immorality and emotional inhibition. The Holy Qur'an says:

"They (your wives) are as a garment to you, and you are as a garment to them." (2: 187)

The mutual relation of husband and wife is here described in words which could not be surpassed in beauty. Herein is the correct description of the relationship between the two. The husband and the wife are for mutual support, mutual comfort and mutual protection, fitting into each other as garments fit into each other.

The Holy Qur'an further points out that sexual gratification in the married life is not meant only for the satisfaction of the physical lust, but it must be directed to some higher ends.

"Your women are tilth for you, so go into your tilth as ye like, and provide beforehand for your souls, and fear Allah and know that you are going to meet Him."

(Qur'an, 2: 223)

Here the wives are likened to the cultivable land which are ploughed for sowing and reaping the produce (in the form of offspring) and not merely for carnal indulgence. The concluding part of the verse refers to still higher and sublimer ends which tell that even in the height of carnal pleasure the moral and spiritual responsibilities should not in any way be lost sight of; rather one should be more conscious to them when one is enjoying physical pleasure; these are the moments when the fear of the Lord and the accountability in the Hereafter is likely to be blurred or effaced from one's mind.

Ibn 'Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"If anyone amongst you intends to go to his wife, he should say: In the name of Allah, O Allah, ward us against Sha'itan and keep away the Sha'itan from the one that you have bestowed upon us, and if He has ordained a male child from them, Sha'itans will never be able to do harm to him."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

This Hadis is quite significant in the sense that it show how Islam permeated and diffuses God-consciousness and piety even in these activities of life which are generally looked down upon by other religions as mundane activities of life. The sexual act is considered as an act much below the high level of religious piety or as one which undermines God-consciousness, and makes man slave of his base desires. Islam is opposed to such a view. There is nothing profane in Islam. Every act is sacred and can contribute to religious piety provided it is done according to the commands of Allah and with full sense of moral responsibility. The Muslims have been exhorted to supplicate before the Lord even at the time of sexual intercourse, when man is about to be swayed by the urge of flesh so that God-consciousness may not be weakened in him.

Abu Zarr (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah told his Companions that "... in man's sexual intercourse (with his wife) there is a *Sadqa* (charity)." They (the Companions) said: Messenger of Allah, is there reward for him who satisfied his sexual passion among us? He said: "Tell me, if he were to devote it to something forbidden, would it not be a sin on his part? Similarly, if he were to devote it to something lawful, he should have a reward." (Muslim)

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has made it clear that sex is not an evil in itself. That it has been implanted in man by God is a clear proof of the fact that its purpose must be good; for the procreation of human race, and for the expression to that kind of love between husband and wife that makes for true oneness. Islam celebrates sex and its proper use, presenting it as a God-

created, God-ordained and God-blessed urge. It has, however, imposed limits upon its use so that it may not become the misuse of something which is basically pure. Thus the limits set upon sex do not aim at taking the joy out of life, but to provide us with the sign posts *"in order to protect our happiness and help make our life's journey as 'tragedy-free' as possible."*

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"By Him in whose Hand is my life, when a man calls his wife to his bed, and she does not respond the One Who is in the Heaven is displeased with her until he (her husband) is pleased with her." (Bukhari & Muslim)

As a rule, no wife should refuse her husband what he wants from her except on legitimate grounds, *i.e.*, at the time of menstrual flow or fasting. Some theologians regard even this refusal as unlawful as the husband may get enjoyment from his wife in other ways — embracing; kissing etc. The duty of the wife to her husband is to give him pleasure in his bed whenever he wants her.

No woman should, therefore, cause anxiety or give trouble to her husband. She is to give him ease and comforts in the household. If she acts otherwise, she will not be able to be his mate in Paradise. There the pure-eyed virgin maids will be his consorts.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"When a man invites his wife to his bed and she does not come, and he (the husband) spends the night angry with her, the angels curse her until morning."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The conjugal act is the right of the husband and the woman cannot deny him this right without any valid rea-

son for it. If the husband is denied this opportunity, there is every likelihood of his going astray and resorting to immoral practices for his sexual satisfaction. The same is the right of woman also.

Talqe bin Ali (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"When a man calls his wife to satisfy his desire, let her come to him though she is occupied at the oven."

(Tirmizi)

It is the wife's obligation to be sexually responsive and make herself attractively available. A wife may not deny herself to her husband as that leads to deterioration in mutual relations. Many wives are in the habit of doing so that they could assert themselves over their husbands. This leads to coercion or even beating. Whipping of wives is strongly prohibited, especially for forced coition. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"Let none of you whip his wife the whipping of a slave and then towards the end of the day have intercourse with her."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

This is not love but lust. Coition is an act of love, and therefore a wife should be held in tie of love for purpose of coition. Besides, whipping produces estrangement of feelings between husband and wife which are suicidal to domestic peace and earthly pursuits.

Abu Said al-Khudri (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"The most important of the trusts in the sight of Allah on the Day of Judgement is that a man goes to his wife and she goes to him (and the breach of trust is) that he should divulge her secret."

(Muslim)

No man or woman from outside should be told about the sexual gratification of husband and wife, as that would provide others chance to meddle in their private affairs. This being not only sinful but is highly detestable in the sight of Allah. It is unfortunate that nowadays husbands feel proud of reading the love letters of their wives before friends and *vice versa* in order to impress upon others their attachment to their spouses. Not only that they do not feel shy or hesitant in describing their sex relations with their wives. What a tragedy and moral bankruptcy indeed!

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Said (*Raziallahu Anho*) that the Messenger of Allah said:

"On the Day of Judgement there will be a flag fixed behind the buttocks of every person guilty of the breach of faith."
(Muslim)

Bashfulness is a special characteristic of women. If they lose it, they lose all charm. The modern condition of women has become such as to lead us to the conclusion that they have lost all shame, decency and delicacy. They freely engage with men in amorous conversations and keep their private parts almost naked. Both males and females do not feel the least shame in taking to things which are objectionable and indecent. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) remarked:

"When you have no shame do what you like."
(Bukhari)

Hazrat Aisha (*Raziallahu Anha*) said:

"I never looked at (or, I never saw) Allah's Messenger's private parts."
(Ibn Majah)

Compare this with the craze of modern men and women who see each others private parts under flash lights and practise oral sex as well!!!

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"Women who withdraw themselves from their husbands and women who persuade their husbands to divorce them for a compensation are hypocrites." (Nasai)

Khul'a or separating from a wife for a compensation

This is a method of divorce by mutual consent, the wife making some payment to the husband. Abdullah bin Mas'ud (*Raziallahu Anho*) said:

"Allah's Messenger cursed the man who made a woman lawful for her first husband and the one for whom she was made lawful" (Ibn Majah & Darimi)

This refers to an arrangement to marry a divorced woman and to divorce her after having intercourse so that the one who had divorced her might remarry her.

Ibn 'Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported:

"It was revealed to the Messenger of Allah: your wives are a tilth for you. So come to your tilth as you like; come from the front and back, and guard against the rectum and menstruation." (Ibn Majah & Tirmizi)

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Whosoever has sexual intercourse with a woman having menses or a woman by her back, or comes to a soothsayer, is indeed an unbeliever on account of what was revealed upon Muhammad." (Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)

A man is not permitted to have intercourse with his wife during menstrual period. If he does so under the influence of lust, expiation becomes binding. Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"When a man intercourses with his wife while she is in menses, he shall give half a dinar in alms."

(Tirmidhi, Abu Daud, Nasai & Ibn Majah)

The expiation of sexual intercourse in menses is half a *dinar* as stated in the above Hadis. A *dinar* is.... equivalent to $4^{1/2}$ *mashas* of gold. If gold sells at Rs. 6000/- per *tola*, then a *dinar* becomes equivalent to 2250 Rupees or 50 U.S. dollars. The majority of jurists including Imams Shafeyi and Abu Hanifa hold that paying half *dinar* as expiation is only asking forgiveness to Allah for the sin one has committed. He who thinks that intercourse in mense is lawful, becomes an unbeliever in the word of Allah, and he who had done intercourse knowing it to be unlawful but being unable to control himself becomes a sinner. The prohibition of sexual intercourse with menstruating woman is justified also on medical and hygienic grounds. So it is wise to refrain from sexual intercourse with women who are susceptible to disease during the menstrual flow. The Muslims are, however, permitted to eat and drink with their women during this period, embrace and kiss them. It is sexual intercourse with them that is prohibited. The Qur'an says:

"They question thee (O Muhammad) concerning menstruation. Say: It is an illness, so let women alone at such times and go not in unto them till they are cleansed. And when they have purified themselves, then go in unto them as Allah hath enjoined upon you. Truly Allah loveth those who turn unto Him, and loveth those who have a care for cleanliness." (2: 222)

It is also unlawful to have sexual intercourse with wife after childbirth till the stoppage of blood nearly up to the 40th day. Besides, it is not desirable to have intercourse with wife during the advanced stage of pregnancy.

Asma bint Yezid (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported that she heard the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) say:

"Don't kill your children secretly, because Gailah intercourse will overtake a horse-man and stumble him down from his horse."* (Abu Daud)

In this case permission was sought from the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) for birth control as there was a suckling child. It is, however, preferable to aid cohabitation during the period when the baby is to be suckled provided one can exercise sexual restraint without unbearable hardship.

Generally speaking, sexual intercourse is desirable when the passions of the husband and the wife are high. It is the duty of the wife to win her husband's mind by submitting to her sexual desire. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) once said:

"Whoso sees a woman who appears pleasing to him should go unto his wife; because there is with her the like of what is with her." (Darimi)

This is by way of teaching to the Prophet's followers. As the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) was a great teacher of mankind, he left instruction for the guidance of mankind in all matters great and small. There is no teaching which he himself did not illustrate in his life.

If a man vows not to go unto his wife for four months, and if in the meantime, he does not have sexual intercourse with her, the wife will be considered as divorced if not taken in the meantime by reasserting conjugal relations. Such an oath of *Ila* regarding wife can be

*Gailah is called suckling during pregnancy. It also means sexual intercourse of husband with his wife at a time when the child is suckling.

broken with expiation. The expiation (*Kaffara*) is to free a slave or fasting that he must fast for sixty consecutive days. If someone is unable to fast for health reason, he must feed sixty persons or spend in charity an amount equivalent to feeding sixty persons.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Accursed is he who goes to the woman (wife) from the anus."
(Ahmad & Abu Daud)

The Jews used to come to their wives by the back, i.e., by the rectum. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) made this unlawful. He directed men to come by the natural way (i.e., vaginal canal) in whatever position they like. Coition is an act of procreation whereas this unnatural practice is not only filthy, but quite unproductive, rather very harmful and injurious for health. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has rightly cursed one who indulges in this abominable act.

Allah has not made the woman a happy hunting ground for man, but the tilth in which they are required to sow the seed and reap the harvest. The simile of tilth used in verse 223 of *Surah al-Baqara* and repeated subsequently in order to stress the object behind this act of tilling — that is to get harvest (children) and not merely carnal pleasure. This simile also makes it clear that birth control is inconsistent with the teachings of Islam.

THE TRUE QUALITY OF A GOOD WIFE

WE read in the Holy Qur'an:

"Men are in charge of women, because Allah hath made the one of them excel the other, and because they spend of their-property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which Allah hath guarded." (4: 34)

The above verse summarises some of the sterling qualities of a good wife: she is obedient and harmonious in her husband's presence and in his absence guards his reputation and property and her own virtue as ordained by Allah. The good wife, remembering how Allah has given her a sheltered position, does everything to justify the trust reposed in her.

The true qualities of a good and exemplary wife are further elaborated in the following *ahadis*:

1. Hazrat Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying, *"When the wife says the five-times prayers, fasts for the whole month (of Ramazan), abstains from adultery and obeys her husband, she will be told to enter Paradise through any door she likes."* (Ahmad)
2. Hazrat Omar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"Shall I not inform you about the best treasure which a man should hoard? — a virtuous wife who pleases him whenever he turns*

his look towards her, and who obeys him whenever he orders her, who guards herself when he is absent from her." (Abu Daud)

A virtuous wife is a man's best treasure according to the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). The object of treasures is to gain comforts; but nothing can give more comfort and solace than a virtuous and chaste wife. She is always a joy to her husband. Besides, a virtuous wife can make her husband and children virtuous. Mother has the greatest share in the formation of character of the children. A virtuous wife centralises love in her husband thereby keeping him in absolute check from extravagant mode of life. The mother is the queen of the household and unless the queen is pious and virtuous, the inmates cannot be expected to turn out good.

3. Hazrat Abu Omamah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported from the Messenger of Allah who used to say: *"Next to fear of Allah, the believer finds nothing good for him than a virtuous wife. If he bids her, she obeys him; if he looks at her, she gives him pleasure; and if he is absent from her, she guards herself and his property."* (Ibn Majah)
4. Hazrat Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah was asked: "Who among women is the best?" He replied: *"She who gives pleasure to him (husband) when he looks, obeys him when he bids and who does not oppose him regarding herself and her riches, fearing his displeasure."* (Nasai)

The wife is expected to contribute to the success and peacefulness of the marriage as much as possi-

ble. Attentive to her husband's comfort and well being she should neither offend him nor hurt his feeling. It would have been easy for the Prophet's first wife, Khadijah (*Raziallahu Anha*), to hurt his feelings when he first told her about the angel Gabriel coming to him and pressing him to his chest. When he narrated the event, he was trembling with fear, but she comforted him and put his heart at ease.

5. Uqba bin Amer (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"Everything with which a man plays is unlawful except his shooting with his arrow, and his training his horse, and his sporting with his wife, and verily these are of the truths."*

(Trimizi, Ibn Majah & Abu Daud)

These three things are useful sports. The two are necessary in case of war or *Jihad* in the way of Allah, and the third thing is for domestic and conjugal happiness. Islam, therefore, recognises everything which is necessary for fighting in the way of Allah and which brings greater good than its injury. Games of chance have been made unlawful with the exception of three, as these are not needed in the way of Allah and bring more injury than good in form of rancour, loss of time, dispute and quarrels. Playing with arrows, training of horses and sporting with wife should be made as they serve double purposes — pleasure and physical exercise.

6. Sauban (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: *"The best of the property is a remembering tongue (about Allah), a grateful heart and a believing wife who helps him in his faith."*

(Ahmad & Ibn Majah)

Such was Hazrat Khadijah (*Raziallahu Anho*) — the widowed wife of the Holy Prophet, who was the first of the Muslims believing in the truth of his mission. He got wonderful consolation from her at the time of extreme anxiety. From this, we can infer how virtuous wives can help us in struggle for the enforcement of *Shari'ah* in Muslim lands.

7. Hazrat Aisha (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that Allah's Messenger said to her, *"If you wish to join me (in the Hereafter), be satisfied with worldly things to the extent of a rider's provision, avoid sitting with the rich, and do not consider a garment worn out till you patch it."* (Trimizi)

This should serve as an eye opener to those of our sisters who don one attire in the morning and another in the evening!

8. Abu Umama Ilyas bin Salaba (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, *"Listen, listen! Wearing old clothes is a part of faith, wearing old clothes is a part of faith."* (Abu Daud)
9. Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying, *"He who wears grand clothes in this world will be made by Allah to wear humble clothes on the Day of Resurrection."* (Ahmad, Abu Daud & Ibn Majah)
10. The Messenger of Allah was quoted as saying, *"He who gives up wearing beautiful garments when he is able to do so (out of humility), will be clothed by Allah with the robe of honour and he who marries for Allah's sake will be crowned by Allah with the crown of the kingdom."* (Abu Daud & Tirmizi)

11. Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying, "*Whoso imitates other people becomes one of them.*" (Abu Daud)

Let those who wear of advocate wearing Western dress ponder over this Hadis and determine their destiny for themselves!

12. Imran bin Hussain (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying, "*The perfume used by men should have an odour, but no colour, and perfume used by women should have a colour but no odour.*" (Abu Daud)

13. Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) said that he heard the Messenger of Allah say, "*The prayer of a woman who has perfumed herself to go to the Mosque is not accepted till she bathes as she would (take a bath) for sexual defilement.*" (Abu Daud)

14. Abu Musa (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, "*Every eye is adulterous (when it cast glances with lust on strange women), and when a woman perfumes herself and passes a company, she is such and such*" — meaning adulterous. (Tirmizi)

It is high time that our sisters took heed of this warning and avoid using perfume while going out for genuine need as perfume attracts the attention of passers — by who may be led to stare at such women with evil intentions.

15. Uqba bin Amir (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that Allah's Messenger used to restrain people who adorned themselves and wore silk, saying, "*If you want the adornment and silk of Paradise, do not wear them in this world.*" (Nasai)

Here it would also be worthwhile to narrate the story of rigorous domestic duties performed by Hazrat Fatimah (*Raziallahu Anha*), the dearest and most beloved daughter of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*):

Hazrat Ali says: "Fatimah used to grind the grain herself which caused corns on her hands. She carried water for the house in a leather bag, which caused scars on her breast. She cleaned the house herself, which made her clothes dirty. Once some war captives were brought to Madinah. I (Ali) said to her, 'Go to the Prophet and request him for an assistant to help you in your home work.' She went to him but found many people round him. As he was very modest, she could not be bold enough to request the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in the presence of other people. Next day the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) came to our house and said, 'Fatimah! What made you come to me yesterday?' She felt shy and kept quiet. I (Ali) said: 'O Prophet of Allah! Fatimah has developed corns and scars on her hands and breast on account of grinding and carrying water. She is constantly busy in cleaning the house and in other domestic jobs, causing her clothes to remain dirty. I (Ali) informed her about the captives and advised her to go to you and request for a servant.' The Prophet said, "Fatimah! Fear Allah. Acquire *Taqwa* (piety) and keep doing your service to Allah and attending to your domestic jobs. When you go to bed recite *Subhanallah* 33 times and *Allahuakbar* 34 times. This you will find more helpful than an assistant will: Fatimah remarked, 'I am content with Allah and His Prophet'."

Look this is the life of the Prophet's dear daughter. In moderately rich families of our times the ladies think it below their dignity to attend to domestic work. They need assistance in each and everything. What a difference!

The main responsibility of ensuring that an Islamic way of life is instituted in the home rests on the husband. Allah commands in the Holy Qur'an:

"O Believers! Save yourselves and your families from the Fire." And the only way of saving ourselves and our families from the Fire — the punishment of Allah — is in the obedience of Allah's Law and in emulation of the life-example of the (last) Messenger of Allah.

PLEASURE OF HUSBAND

A wife is the centre of activity at home. By her forbearance and her concern for everyone, she creates a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Her ability to listen with loving attention draws her closer to her children and to her husband. She is a source of consolation and comfort for them. The wife is not expected to be rude to her husband.

Hazrat Abu Bakr (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"A woman who annoys her husband with her tongue, she incurs the reproach and wrath of Allah, all the angels and the human beings."

Similarly Hazrat Usman (*Raziallahu Anho*) narrated that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"A woman who says to her husband that she has seen no good in him, Allah blots her good deeds over a period of seventy years although she may have observed fast all along during the day and worshipped at night."

(Ibn Majah & Nasai)

Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"If all the earth turns into gold and silver and some woman takes it to the house of her husband and says boastfully that all this wealth is her's and that he (husband) has no share in it, Allah thereat renders waste all her good actions although these may be plentiful."

(Ahmad)

Generally rich and resourceful women wedded to poor families make such a show of vanity and haughtiness, which is highly contemptible in the eyes of Islam as it, denudes one of her good deeds without any gain. It is a sin without pleasure. Our ladies should therefore guard themselves against abuse of tongue and slander which are the worst and most abominable of satanic attributes which exist in us.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"Do you know the thing which most commonly brings people into Paradise? It is the fear of Allah and good character. Do you know what most commonly brings people into Hell? It is the two hollow things: the mount and the private parts."

(Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)

Ubada bin as-Samit (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"If you guarantee me six things on your part, I shall guarantee you Paradise. Speak the truth when you talk, keep a promise when you make it, when you trusted with something fulfil your trust, avoid sexual immorality, lower your eyes, and restrain your hands from injustice."

(Baihaqi)

There is a great lesson for us in the above quoted *ahadis* and it should not go unnoticed; for a wilful disregard and abstinence on our part may spell disaster.

The only and the only solution and the best to ensure a happy home wherein all members of the family will flourish — wherein the husband-wife relationship and the parent-children relationship will be one of joy and happiness — is to adopt a purely Islamic way of life. For our family success and happiness it is essential that the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) govern our lives. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Verily in the Messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him who looketh unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembereth Allah much." (33: 21)

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Islam is: To worship Allah alone, not to make anyone sharer of worship due unto the Lord to offer Salat properly (i.e., with devotion and at the prescribed time with Jamaat), pay Zakat and fast in the month of Ramazan, perform the Pilgrimage (to the House of Allah), enjoin right conduct and forbid the wrong and make salutations (Assalam-o-Alaikum) to the inmates of the house. Whoso forsakes any of these things, he harms one of the component units of Islam and if any one abandons all these characteristics (of Faith), he has turned his back from Islam." (Hakim)

The Qur'an also says the same thing in its inimitable style:

"O ye who believe! Enter into Islam wholeheartedly and follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! He is an open enemy for you. And if ye slide back after the clear proofs have come unto you, then know that Allah is Mighty, Wise." (2: 208-209)

Asma bint Yazid Ansari (*Raziallahu Anha*) came to the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and said:

“O Prophet of Allah! You are dearer to me than my parents. The Muslim ladies have deputed me as their representative to talk to you on their behalf. Verily you are the Prophet of Allah for both men and women. We ladies stay for most part of our time within the four walls of our houses. We remain pinned to our jobs of fulfilling the sexual desires of men, bearing children for them and looking after their homes. Notwithstanding all this, men excel us in getting reward for thing which we are unable to do. They go and say their daily *Salat* and weekly *Jumma* in the *Masjid*, visit the sick, attend the funerals, perform *Hajj* and above all fight in the way of Allah. When they go for *Hajj* or *Jihad*, we look after their property, bring up their children and weave cloth for them. Don't we share reward with them?”

The Prophet, addressing the *Sahabah* (Companions) sitting round him, said: “Did you ever hear a lady asking a better question?” *Sahabah* replied: “O Prophet of Allah! We never thought that a lady could ever put such a question.” The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), addressing Asma said: “Listen attentively and then go and tell the ladies who have sent you that when a woman seeks the pleasure of her husband and carries out her domestic functions to his satisfaction, she gets the same reward as men get for all these services to Allah.” Asma returned very happily after getting this reply to her question.

Obedience to and good behaviour towards husbands is a very great asset for the ladies provided they know its value.

The following is reported to have been said by the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in this connection:

1. "A woman whose husband is pleased with her at the time of her death goes straight to Paradise. (Tirmizi)
2. "One who sows seeds of discord between a woman and her husband does not belong to us." (Abu Daud)
3. "There are three (persons) whose prayer is not accepted, nor their virtues taken above: The fugitive slave till he returns to his masters and places his hand in their hands; and the woman on whom her husband remains dissatisfied, and the drunkard till he becomes sober." (Baihaqi)
4. Hazrat Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) had said: "For a woman her husband is Paradise as well as Hell."

(Ahmad and Nasai)

It means that if her husband is pleased, it is Paradise for her but if he is displeased, it is Hell for her.

5. Hazrat Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reports that she asked the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) whose right was the greatest on the woman and the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: Husband's. Then she asked: Whose right was greatest on man and the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: His mother's. (Bazaz and Hakim)
6. Hazrat Ibn Abi Aufi (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said: "By Allah in Whose hand is my life, the woman who does not discharge her duties to her husband is disobedient to Allah, and the discharge of duties towards Allah depends on the discharge of duties towards the husband." (Ibn Majah)
7. Hazrat Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) had said: "Al-

lah would not like even to look at the woman who is not thankful to her husband.” (Nasai)

It means that wife is dependent on her husband in all matters and what would be greater ungratefulness if she does not thank him.

8. Hazrat Zaid bin Arqam (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: “A woman will not discharge her obligation to Allah unless she discharges her obligation to her husband.” (Tabrani)

That is to say, the discharge of obligation to Allah is dependent on the discharge of the obligation to the husband.

9. Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: “It was not permissible for any woman who believes in Allah to allow anyone to enter the house whose coming is not liked by her husband. And it is not permissible for any woman to go out of the house if her husband resents it. And it is not permissible for a woman to beat her husband or to withdraw from his bed. If the husband is displeased, she should try to placate him. If the husband is satisfied with her excuse, it is better and Allah will also be satisfied but if the husband is not satisfied even then she has done her duty and she is not accountable to Allah.” (Hakim)

That is to say that if the husband because of his foolishness or arrogance is not satisfied the woman's responsibility has been discharged.

10. Hazrat Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) had said: Any woman who goes out of the house without permission of her husband, then all the angels of the Heav-

ens. curse her till she returns and besides men and Jinn whatever object she passes by it curse her."

(Tabrani)

Obedience to the husband is obligatory only in what is good. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has admonished:

"There is no submission in matters involving Allah's disobedience or displeasure. Submission is obligatory only in what is good (and reasonable)." (Muslim)

Thus obedience to husband is subservient to the latter's obedience to Allah and His Messenger. So long as the husband obeys Allah and His Apostle, it is the duty of the wife to obey him but when he disobeys Allah and His Messenger and commands his wife to do the same (e.g., discard *Purdah* (veil), accompany him to cinema or attend mixed parties *etc.*), the wife is no longer bound to obey him. Obedience shall be accorded to husband in all circumstances except when the wife has clear signs of his disbelief in or disobedience to Allah — signs that could be used as a conscientious justification for non-compliance with his orders.

This has been explicitly laid down in the following *ahadis*:

- (i) "No obedience is due from the created being which involves the disobedience of the Creator."
- (ii) "Obedience is due only in matters approved by the *Shari'ah*."
- (iii) "He who commands you in what is sinful in the sight of Allah you should neither pay heed to him nor obey him."

But nowadays wives obey their husbands more where violation of Islamic injunctions is involved but hardly pay any heed when they are called upon to observe the things ordained by Allah and His Messenger. This state of affairs is highly deplorable and calls for an immediate halt.

Qais bin S'ad (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"Had I ordered anybody to prostrate before anyone, I would have ordered women to prostrate before their husbands on account of their duties towards them ordained by Allah." (Abu Daud)

Such is the rank and status of husband in the sight of Allah. May He enlighten our womenfolk to seek the pleasure of their husbands by being obedient, dutiful and respectful. This will *In-sha-Allah* surely make them very dear to their husbands. But if they are not grateful to their husbands, they are not grateful to Allah either. The Messenger of Allah said:

"Whoever is not grateful to man is not grateful to Allah." (Ahmad & Tirmizi)

MISAPPROPRIATION OF HUSBAND'S PROPERTY

It has been generally observed that one of the major causes responsible for husband's cruelty towards his wife is the latter's misappropriation of husband's property either by way of stealing or carelessness to economise. Among the common and prevalent factors which lead to many a divorce are: anger, pride, jealousy, greed and misappropriation. Many of the girls belonging to middle or lower middle class families upon marriage to wealthy per-

sons resort to this ignoble practice. They send money and other items of daily use to their less fortunate parents and relatives in the form of "gifts" without the knowledge or concurrence of their husbands. This one-way traffic of sending "gifts" is, nevertheless, detected sooner or later by shrewd husbands, which result in bad relations, quarrels and even beating. Those guilty of this crime need to repent and realise that none of their relatives or friends can grow rich by unfair means: for Allah blights ill-gotten wealth and makes honest transactions fruitful.

Greed for riches is a disease in the mind of a man/woman which arrests the progress of divine attributes of soul which should be removed by adopting simple and austere living. One should remember that increase of wealth opens the gate of wants and expenses, besides uneasiness of mind. As such one should look to those who are lower than him/her in wealth and not to those who are higher. The Holy Qur'an advises:

"Restrain thyself along with those who cry unto their Lord at morn and evening, seeking His countenance; and let not thine eyes overlook them, desiring the pomp of the life of the world; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who followeth his own lust and whose case hath been abandoned." (18: 29)

A person who looks to those who are superior to him or her in wealth, knowledge or attainments feel inclined to be ungrateful to Allah. Therefore, Islam prescribed that a Muslim shall look towards those who are lower than him or her. The only exception has been made in case of pious works.

Ibn 'Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Whoso has been gifted with four thing, has been given the good of this world and the Hereafter; a grateful heart, a remembering tongue, a patient body over calamities, and a wife who does not seek breach of trust regarding herself and his property." (Baihaqi)

The last portion of this Hadis is very important in the context of our present discussion as neglect and dishonesty in this regard has engendered bitterness and spoiled happy matrimonial relations.

Abu Omamah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah say in his sermon at the Farewell Pilgrimage:

"No woman shall spend anything from the house of her husband without her husband's permission. He was asked: O Messenger of Allah! — nor food? He replied: That is the best of our properties." (Tirmizi)

It is not lawful for wives to spend anything from the house of their husbands except with their permission. But if they know that they (husbands) won't be displeased with a thing spent or given in alms or their implied permission can be gathered, it can be spent lawfully. Express permission is not necessary in these cases. It is, however, lawful for mother, daughter and wife to take food from the houses of her son, father and husband even without permission. In cases where the husband is a miserly fellow, the *Shari'ah* also permits wives to spend on food and cloth as are necessary for them and their children according to means. Women cannot, however, waste things or sell them privately without knowledge of the husband. So the women need to take meticulous care in spending. The money that they save because of their austerity and diligence in managing the household affairs is in fact a bonus that they add to their husband's income.

In a Hadis narrated by 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (*Razialahu Anho*) the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said that a woman who steals and acts dishonestly towards her husband's property is cursed, by seventy thousand angels.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) once observed: *"There is no woman who steals from her husband's house but Allah writes to her account the crime of seventy thefts."*

And the punishment of a single theft according to the Qur'an is the cutting off of hand. The relevant verses are:

"As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds, an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is Mighty, Wise. But whoso repenteth after his wrongdoing and amendeth, Lo! Allah will relent toward him. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful." (5: 38-39)

Once a woman belonging to a high family committed theft. The elders of the tribe sent a deputation on the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), pleading for leniency and so the people conjectured that he would show kindness to her. As the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) was an embodiment of justice, he frowned pleading and meted out the ordained punishment to her. He emphasised also the fact in doing justice no discrimination shall be made and remarked:

"Had she been Fatimah, I would have certainly cut off her hand." (Nasai)

According to Imam Abu Hanifa (*Rahmatullahi Alaihi*) theft of 10 *Dirhams* or its equivalent property calls for cutting of hand. There is no cutting of hand in case of thefts in the houses of relatives within the prohibited de-

grees, nor for thefts committed in an expedition or holy war, nor theft committed by a servant or slave.

(Fazlul Karim, *Al-Hadis*, p. 554)

Hazrat Aisha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"When wife spends food of her house without spoiling there is for her its reward for what she gives away and there is also its reward for her husband for what he earns, and the like (reward) for the storekeeper — none of them diminishing from the reward of another."

(Bukhari)

Both husbands and wives should entertain guests, give the surplus of their food to the poor and the needy and the neighbours. This good usage was upheld by the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and so he said that women should not spoil their surplus food but give it away in alms even without permission of their husbands.

There are five things which it is not lawful for a wife to refuse to her neighbours in their need, viz. water, fire, leaven, the hand-mill and a needle, while for (liberality in the matter of) each of these there is a good deed written to her account.

Ibn 'Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that he heard Allah's Messenger say:

"The believer is not the one who eats his fill when his neighbour beside him is hungry."

(Baihaqi)

'Abd-ur-Rehman bin Abu Qurad said that the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) performed ablution one day and his companions began to wipe themselves with the water he had used. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) asked them what induced them to do that and when they replied that it was love for Allah and His Messenger he

said. "If any one is pleased to love Allah and His Messenger, or rather to have Allah and His Messenger love him, he should speak the truth when he tells anything, fulfil his trust when he is put in a position of trust, and be a good neighbour."

MAJORITY OF THE DWELLERS OF HELL WILL BE WOMEN, WHO CURSE TOO MUCH AND ARE UNGRATEFUL TO THEIR SPOUSES

It is narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah bin 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah observed:

"O Womenfolk, you should give charity and ask much forgiveness for I saw you in bulk amongst the dwellers of Hell. A wise lady among them said: Why is it, Messenger of Allah that our folk are in bulk in Hell? Upon this the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) observed: "You curse too much and are ungrateful to your spouses. I have seen none lacking in common sense and failing in religion but (at the same time) robbing the wisdom of the wise, besides you." Upon this the woman remarked: What is wrong with our common sense and with religion? He (the Holy Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) observed: "Your lack of common sense, (can be well judged from the fact) that the evidence of two women is equal to one man, that is a proof of the lack of common sense, and you spend some nights (and days) in which you do not offer prayer and in the month of Ramazan (during the days) you do not observe fast, that is a failing in religion." (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has supported his contention with reason. Women are generally shy, capricious and whimsical, and are easily carried off

by their emotions and thus their study of the situation is hardly objective. That is the reason why the *Shari'ah* has accepted the evidence of two women equal to one man and it is only in this sphere that they are declared to be inferior in wisdom to men. But in their own sphere their evidence is considered to be most authentic, for example in *radaah** it is absolutely on their evidence that the case is decided. Women are forbidden to pray and observe fasts during the days of menstruation. This act has been narrated not as a wilful negligence on their part but to stress the importance of prayer and fasting in Islam. As regards the phrase "robbing the wisdom of the wise" it means that woman has an art to play with the sentiments of man and she succeeds in forcing her will upon him. That is how the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) observed on another occasion: "*Verily the destruction of men is in obeying their women.*"

Usama bin Zaid (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"I stood at the gate of Paradise, and the majority of those who entered it were the poor, the rich being held back, except that those who were to go to Hell were ordered to be sent there. I stood at the gate of the Hell, and the majority of those who entered it were women."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

In another version of Hadis it is stated that the small number of women in the Paradise is on account of the fact that love of gold and silk kept them away from the remembrance of Allah and observance of the tenets of Faith in the world.

* It means those cases relating to the physical condition of women where the evidence of females is sufficient for the purposes of law, e.g. fosterage, menstruation, criminal assault, etc.

So if the women are to be prevented from going to Hell as well as to be saved from the divine wrath and the Holy Prophet's displeasure, give them religious education, take appropriate care and keep in touch with their activities.

Huzaifa (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that he heard Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) say in the course of his sermon:

"Wine is the means of amassing offence, women are the snares of the devil, and love of the world is the beginning of every sin." He told that he heard him say also, *"Put women in an inferior position since Allah has done so."* (Razin & Baihaqi)

Wine, women and wealth are such enticing things for the acquisition of which man commits sins without number. The fact is that wine is the mother of all evils. That is why Islam has prohibited it in all seriousness. The phrase "Women are the snares of the devil" is explained as meaning either that the devil makes them attractive to men causing temptation, or that he (devil) looks at them to seduce them and to seduce people by them.

Putting the women in an inferior or secondary position means that Almighty Allah has made mention of women after men in the Holy Qur'an. Similarly in congregational prayers, women are required to say the prayer in the last row. In cases of witness, inheritance and rank, Allah has assigned secondary position to women as compared to men. Therefore, women should not be pushed forward or allowed to have prominence in those spheres where Allah has assigned them an inferior position. This is vital for decency and for maintaining equilibrium in the society; otherwise there will be moral chaos, social imbalance and corruption as is being witnessed today because

of the prominence of women in economic, political and social pursuits.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger having said this:

"Two are the types of the denizens of Hell whom I did not see: People having flogs like the tails of the ox with them and they would be beating people, and the women who would be dressed but appear to be naked, who would be inclined (to evil) and make their husbands incline towards it. Their heads would be like the humps of the bukht camel inclined to one side. They will not enter Paradise and they would not smell its odour whereas its odour would be smelt from such and such distance." (Muslim)

As for the first type of people whom the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) mentioned, they are the oppressors who transgress on others. The present age in reality is the age of darkness and dissolution where humanity has returned to barbarity and libertine life and in which despotism and suppressions have replaced kindness and faith, and vice has become supreme while virtue is trampled upon and despised. The modern Socialist and Capitalist "dictators" in most of the Muslim countries come under the purview of this Hadis as they deny civil liberties to the masses by force or coercion lest their vested interests are challenged by the awakened public opinion and because of their un-Islamic living, actions and policies, they (dictators) are the main stumbling bloc in the path of Islamic renaissance.

The second type of people are the lewd and corrupt women, who have discarded all the attributes of chastity and honour and in whose hearts there are no longer even the least remains of belief or fear of Allah. They go out in

public places scantily-dressed and walk before men with full make-up as if they were on their wedding nights! We see examples of this not only in the extreme and daring fashions but in heavily rouged cheeks the thickly-painted lips, the sparkling enamelled finger-nails and their hair is arranged in styles that appear to be more like the hump of a camel than anything else.

These two types of men and women were non-existent at the time of the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), and they were talked about as part of the phenomena that would appear in later ages to denote the approach of the Doomsday.

A Hadis related by Hazrat Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) says that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) observed: "When the following five evils shall creep into my *Ummah*, it will then be destroyed:

- (i) Invoking curses against one another.
- (ii) Use of liquor on a large scale.
- (iii) Wearing of silken clothes.
- (iv) Increased number of dancing girls and their frequent entertainment shows at large gatherings.
- (v) When man shall engage in sexual intercourse with males and women shall engage in sexual acts with the other females, i.e., sodomy and homosexuality."

(Baihaqi)

May the Magnificent Lord, out of His immense bounty, protect us from such evils, for they entail our total destruction.

SHUN MUSIC

UNDOUBTEDLY, music and especially the sexy music of the "modern" age has a strong tendency to excite sexual passions. Songs with the accompaniment of music are stepping-stone to immortality. Dormant passions are excited and these in turn find immoral outlet. Islam, in all fairness, categorically forbids all types of music. Music in Islam is regarded as a *Kabirah* (great) sin.

The Holy Qur'an says with regard to music:

"And among men are those who purchase idle tales without any knowledge; so that they may mislead (men) from the path of Allah; and they make a mockery of the Laws (of Allah); they are the ones for whom there is a disgraceful punishment; and, when our Laws are rehearsed to them, they turn away in pride as if they did not hear them; as if there are plugs in their ears. Give them the news of a dreadful punishment." (31: 6-8)

The *Mufasssireen* (commentators) of the Qur'an and the *Fuqaha* (jurists) say that these verses were specifically revealed to declare as unlawful music, singing and novels (romances) which divert man's attention from Allah. The Almighty Lord, in stating some of the noble qualities of the Believers, says in the Qur'an:

"And when they hear Laghw (futility and sin), they turn away from it, and, they say: For us, our deeds, and for you, your deeds: Peace be upon you; we do not follow the ignorant ones." (28: 55)

Further, Allah says about the Believers:

"And when they pass (by chance) upon Laghw, they pass by it in noble dignity (i.e., they do not indulge in it)." (25: 72)

The Messenger of Allah said:

1. *"Verily, Allah sent me as a mercy unto mankind, and as a guide unto mankind. And, my Creator has commanded me with the destruction of musical instruments."*
2. *"There will be men from my Ummah who will consume alcohol, giving it another name (so as to deceive themselves and others). Singing girls and musical instruments will be playing to them. Allah will cause the earth to swallow them. Allah will transfer them into apes and swines."*
3. *"Every play (sport or amusement) of the world excepting three (types of play) is Baatil (baseless, null and not permissible) – (the three types being) your practising with your bow and arrow, your training, your horse, and your playing with your family."*

(Hakim)

The Holy Qur'an commands:

".... be not soft of speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease aspire (to you), but utter customary speech."

(33: 32)

Islam, has, hence forbidden its women to speak in a soft and sweet tone to other men. How then our women dare to sing melodious songs, which only let loose waves of sexual passion!

Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: *"Song generates hypocrisy in the*

heart as water grows crop." There is no doubt that modern music has a strong tendency to excite sexual passions. Songs with the accompaniment of modern lust-provoking music are gateways to fornication and adultery. Among the signs of the Last Hour will be "... a man shall obey his wife and disobey his mother, he shall draw his friend near and keep his father away....singing girls and musical instruments shall appear, wine will be drunk...." (Tirmizi)

The frivolity of music casts a spell of hypocrisy over the heart of the listener and transports him or her from the realms of reality to the limbo of dreamland. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) is reported to have said:

"With every musical bell is a Sha'itan."

And again:

"The angels enter not a home wherein there is a musical instrument."

Music and indulgence therein have been described as *Fisq* (open and naked sin) in Islamic terminology. In fact, music and dancing have been proved to be a great stimulant for carnal sex, a stepping-stone to fornication and adultery. It is, therefore, essential that every Muslim man and woman take utmost care to reclaim and preserve himself or herself from the slippery paths leading to the abyss of immorality.

STAY AWAY FROM CINEMA

It is an admitted fact that most of the moral and social evils stem from the following:

1. free intermingling of the sexes
2. co-education

3. immodest and scanty dressing
4. music, dancing and television
5. alcoholism and drugs
6. illicit and pre-marital sex
7. courting before marriage.

And there is no denying the fact that these evils are given birth and nourished to a large extent by the cinema which revolves around free love whereas morality is an indispensable requirement for the healthy growth of a society from the animal stage of the level of human perfection. However, the modern man/woman is prone to confuse entertainment with immorality.

The very basis of the cinema is the institution of photography which is illegal in Islam. Therefore, it requires no emphasis in maintaining that cinema must likewise be illegal. It is inconceivable that Islam can permit the operation of an institution which has at its very foundations an un-Islamic element which dominates the whole atmosphere.

Indeed, the evil, the crime, the vice and the misery which flow from the cinema house cannot be over-emphasised. According to the lovers of Western civilisation, the cinema is a form of entertainment. But it seems that in Western terminology entertainment is synonymous with immorality. The basic theme of Western civilisation has been its revolt against all moral and spiritual values. In view of this outlook prevailing in the world today one can easily understand why there is so much licentiousness, drunkenness and debauchery than ever before.

Crimes of rape, murder, robbery and many other sex crimes owe their origin to the cinema houses. The rise

of the crime wave in the West is most alarming. Time and again we find thoughtful citizens of the Western world laying the blame for the soaring crime rate at doorstep of the cinema house. Every conceivable evil is dished out to all and sundry in the cinema and on television.

The cinema wields the power to subvert and debase the minds of an entire nation. Instead of man marching along the road of moral progress and development, cinema directs his mind on to the roads of immorality and crime. The disastrous consequences of cinema are manifesting daily and they spell the ruin of individuals, families, societies and nations.

Because of all the evils emanating from cinema, because of the misery caused by corruptive films and the all too well-known disastrous results following in its wake, Islam has strictly forbidden this immoral form of "entertainment".

A number of evil agents join hands in order to render possible the functioning of the un-Islamic "entertainment" known as cinema. We briefly enumerate these un-Islamic aspects which constitute the basis of the bioscope:

1. Photography which is *haram* (unlawful) in Islam.
2. The intermingling of sexes which is strictly forbidden by Islam.
3. Music, which is also forbidden by Islam.
4. The staggering amount of money which could be calculated in millions of dollars being wasted away annually by the cinema-loving public.

Every true Muslim who regards Islam as the Law of Allah has no alternative but to confess that the cinema is indeed a social evil and as such it can never be tolerated

by Islam which demands from its adherents a very high standard of morality. No deep understanding is necessary to discern the evils flowing from the cinema-house. Yet it is most lamentable to observe that even learned Muslims, in order to conform to the Western mode of living, are condoning this un-Islamic form of "entertainment". Islam will never permit a practice which has the power of perverting nations and making them slaves of passion.

A Muslim in order to be a true follower of Islam should conform to the following standard laid down by the Qur'an:

"Those who witness no falsehood, and, if they pass by futility, they pass by it with honourable (avoidance)."
(25: 73)

In this verse vain talk, undefying jokes, futile entertainment, evil shows and all sins in general are being deprecated. This verse condemns the vain, futile type of amusement and entertainment of which the cinema-house forms a vital part. For those who choose to pass their time in amusement and entertainment the Qur'an says:

"The life of this world is but play and amusement, but the best is the Home in the Hereafter for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand?"
(6: 32)

Victims of lust cannot understand and appreciate Islamic prohibitions pertaining to evil and unwholesome "amusement" but all those who are infatuated by the cinema should remember that in order to veil their un-Islamic love for cinema they must not make the dangerous error of attempting to legalise an institution which stands condemned in the eyes of Islam. To attend the cinema is indeed a heinous crime, but to attempt to make it lawful is even a greater crime bordering on *Kufr*.

May Allah save us from the pits of vice, lust and immorality to which the Western world has sunk through Cinema and Television. Ameen!

GIVE UP FAMILY PLANNING (Birth Control)

There has recently been a movement about birth control and introduction of various devices to check conception. The movement is chiefly due to free love (so that illegitimate children could be warded off); and in case of marriage to get rid of marital responsibilities and obligations. Birth control is thus opposed to God's intention. Marriage has been defined as the union of two bodies for procreation of children. If birth control is widely practised (as is being foolishly done in many Muslim countries under the influence of their Western mentors who lavishly give them aid and equipment for this ignoble purpose), there will be a speedy decline of population. As such birth control should be resorted to only in case of extreme necessity, such as wife's ill health owing to constant births. Imam Abu Hanifa holds it *makruh* (abominable).

Abu Saeed al-Khudri (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah was asked about 'azl (to have sexual intercourse by withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to avoid conception). He (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"It is not from every water (i.e., semen) that a child is born; and when Allah wishes to create a thing, nothing can prevent Him."
(Muslim)

What the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) wanted to say was that the sexual act is no doubt a natural process of conception, but it does not inevitably lead to

the birth of a child. It is just by accident that the sperm gets into the womb of the female and she becomes pregnant. This accident is outside the orbit of human will and power. If we reflect on the process of birth, we will find that, like all other phenomena of Nature, the final dispensation is in the hand of the Mighty Lord. The scientists are of the opinion that one discharge of man has so innumerable sperms in it that it is sufficient to fertilise all the women of the world, but millions of sperms go waste in every act of sexual intercourse and it is by chance that one reaches the womb and becomes fruitful.

Omar bin Al-Khattab (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah prohibited drawing out semen from a free woman without her permission. (Ibn Majah)

Jabir bin 'Abdullah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that a person asked Allah's Apostle (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) saying:

I have a slave-girl and I practise 'azl with her, whereupon Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: This can not prevent that which Allah has decreed. The person then came (after some time) and said to the Messenger of Allah, that the slave-girl about whom I talked to you has conceived, whereupon Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: I am the servant of Allah and His Messenger. (Muslim)

The concluding portion of the above quoted Hadis implies:

"My verdict should not be taken as the verdict of an ordinary man. My decisions and informations are always correct as I am divinely inspired."

The scientists agree that there is no sure method of birth control except operation. 'Azl is an uncertain method in the sense that there is every possibility of sperm finding

its way into the womb. It was on account of this reason that Hazrat 'Umar, the Second Caliph, declared the child of a person as his legitimate child who practised 'azl with a slave woman, but in spite of this preventive measure she had a conception.

Sa'd bin Abu Waqqas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that a person came to Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and said: *I do 'azl with my wife.* Thereupon Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: *Why do you do that?* The person said: *I fear harm to her child or her children.* Thereupon Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: *If that were harmful, it would harm the Persians and the Greeks.* (Muslim)

The medical view is that there is no hard and fast rule about the effects of cohabitation on the woman. In some cases this act does harm to the women in that the milk in their breasts is considerably reduced, but in other cases no harm is done to them by this act. No definite rule has, therefore, been made in this respect. It is, however, preferable to avoid cohabitations during the period when the babe is to be suckled provided one can exercise sexual restraint without undergoing unbearable hardship.

Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported:

"We used to practise 'azl during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger. This (the news of this practice) reached Allah's Apostle, and he did not forbid us." (Muslim)

The authentic scholars of Hadis agree that 'azl which in the technical sense implies incomplete sexual intercourse, can be adopted in exceptional circumstances, but it is against the spirit of Islam to adopt it as a matter of routine. For example, if the life of a woman is in danger on account of illness and she is unable to bear the burden of pregnancy or she is too weak to stand the pang of de-

livery, 'azl may be practised in her case. Moreover, if this method is resorted to, it should be done with the explicit consent of the female partner.

It should, however, be borne in mind that this sanction of 'azl in abnormal circumstances should not in any way be made a justification for the birth control movement of our days. The use of contraceptive methods is injurious to health as is stated by renowned physicians of the world. For example, Dr. Amand Routh, M.D., F.R.C.P., said before the commission of inquiry:

"I have no doubt that prevention of maternity by artificial methods invariably produces physical, mental and, I think, moral harm to those who resort to it."

This birth control movement has undermined the morals of the people. Sexual intercourse has become only a pleasure-giving activity without any responsibility and the result is broken homes and alarming rise in adultery and fornication.

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (*Raziallahu Anho*) said that a man asked Allah's Messenger what was the greatest sin in the sight of Allah, to which he replied, "*That you should treat anything as equal to Allah when He has created you.*" "What next?" he asked, to which he replied, "*That you should kill your child for fear that he may eat along-with you.*" "What next?" he asked, to which he replied, "*That you should commit adultery with your neighbour's wife.*"

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The modern birth control and 'population planning' programmes which involve use of contraceptives and other devices fall under this practice of killing children as mentioned in the above Hadis. Instead of spending huge sums of money for popularising such programmes, which

give fillip to immorality, these funds, should be diverted for imparting religious education to women.

Just compare in "family planning" children are despised as intolerable burden and economic liability while Allah, the Creator of all universe, tells in His Holy Qur'an that He will provide sustenance to all living beings and creatures. The following verses of the Qur'an bear eloquent testimony to the fact:

(i) *"Ye slay not your children because of penury ... We provide for you and for them...and that ye draw not nigh to lewd things whether open or concealed."*
(6 : 152)

(ii) *"And there is not a beast in the earth but the sustenance thereof dependeth on Allah."* (11: 6)

(iii) *"He enlargeth providence for whom He will and straiteneth it (for whom He will)."* (42 : 12)

It should be noted that economic prosperity is conferred on those who follow the straight path of Islam in belief and practice.

"And verily We have written in the Scripture, after the Reminder: My righteous slaves will inherit the earth: Lo! There is a plain statement for folk who are devout."
(Qur'an, 21: 105)

Judama (*Raziallahu Anha*), daughter of Wahb, reported that I went to Allah's Messenger along with some persons and he was saying: *"I intend to prohibit cohabitation with the suckling women, but I considered the Greeks and Persians, and saw that they suckle their children and this thing (cohabitation) does not do any harm to them (to the suckling women)."* Then they asked him about 'azl, whereupon he said: *"That is the secret (way of) burying alive."* (Muslim)

Here is a reference to verse eight of Surah *At-Takwir*, which alludes to the practice of pre-Islamic Arabs of burying female children alive either from fear of hunger or disgrace. The complete quotation is:

"And when the girl child that was buried alive is asked for what sin she was slain." (Qur'an, 81: 8-9)

In this Hadis there is a pointed reference to the disapproval of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) against *'azl*...a concept on which the modern birth control programmes and practices are based. The earlier we give up this evil tendency, the better it is for our moral and physical growth.

Maqal bin Yasar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Apostle of Allah said:

"Marry such women as are affectionate and (favourably disposed toward) child-producing; for verily I shall be proud of your larger number among other communities." (Abu Daud & Nasai)

'Abdur Rahman bin Salem (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Apostle of Allah said:

"You should marry virgins, and verily they are sweeter in tongue, more prolific in wombs and more easily satisfied with little." (Ibn Majah)

Had the monster of organised birth control movement raised its dirty head in the days of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), he would have surely declared war against it in the same way as he waged *jihad* against polytheistic customs and practices, for "birth control" destroys morals in the same way as *shirk* (polytheism) destroys true beliefs. It must be emphasised here that birth control movement (now euphemistically called "Family Planning") which has become such an obsession in recent

years is not a natural response to genuine human needs but solely the result of the unnatural materialistic outlook of life prevailing in the West. The motive for the movement is based neither on economic or demographic considerations rather the impetus behind it is the craving or sexual license, frivolity and selfishness. Therefore, birth control as a national and international policy can never be reconciled with Islamic teachings.

REFRAIN FROM WAILING

Mourning on the death of near and dear ones comes out naturally in mind and is not, therefore, illegal. On such an event, there arises a great grief in mind and a great commotion in the whole system, which produce tears in eyes and melancholy look in appearances. That grief, which arises sincerely in heart as a matter of course, cannot be prevented and as such not prohibited. The Holy Prophet himself wept at the demise of his son Ibrahim and some of his beloved Companions. Simple weeping is, therefore, not bad and brings no sin either. But loud wailing followed by striking breasts, hands and feet, and tearing clothes have been held to be abominable. There is no good either in such bewailings and lamentings as in that way the dear deceased ones cannot be regained but on the contrary they open the gate of ill health and misfortune. Such a bewailing man or woman should remember that too much grief is a cause of sudden death.

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"There is none among us who beats faces and tears up shirts and cries aloud like the crying of the Day of Ignorance."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

Abu Saeed al-Khudri (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Apostle of Allah cursed a female mourner and a female hearer of mourning.* (Abu Daud)

Wailing and tearing clothes on account of death of children or some other mishap is thus strictly prohibited; instead patience and forbearance has been prescribed in Islam. The Qur'an says:

"And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops, but give glad tidings to the steadfast, who say when a misfortune striketh them: Lo! We are Allah's and lo! unto Him we are returning." (2: 155-156)

A Hadis of the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) reads:

"If wailing ... woman does not repent before she dies, she will be made to stand on the Day of Resurrection wearing a garment of pitch and chemise of mange." (Muslim)

Abu Burda (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that Allah's messenger had said:

"I have no connection with one who shaves, shouts and tears clothing (in grief and affliction)." (Bukhari & Muslim)

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is also reported to have said:

"Accursed be the (mourning) woman who scratches her face, rends her shifts and cries: woe and a lack-a-day!" (Ahmad & Ibn Majah)

*Here mourner means one who makes *Naahah*, i.e. to weep with the various descriptions of the dead or to cry aloud which was prohibited.

Ibn 'Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) said Allah's Messenger forbade the following of a bier which was accompanied by a woman wailing shrilly.

The best course on facing a calamity is what the Qur'an has said:

"Seek help in patience and prayer; and truly it is hard save for the humble minded, who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are returning." (2: 45-46)

Hazrat Abu Hurairah and Abu Sa'id (*Raziallahu Anhum*) reported the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"No Muslim is afflicted by difficulty, continuous pain, anxiety, grief, injury or care, or even by a thorn with which he is pierced, without Allah thereby making an atonement for his sins." (Bukhari & Muslim)

Sa'ad-bin Abi Waqqas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"It is all good for a believer. If anything good befalls on him, he praises Allah and is grateful, and if a disaster befalls on him, he praises Allah and keeps patience. A believer is, therefore, rewarded in his every affair, even for a morsel of food he lifts up to the mouth of his wife." (Baihaqi)

It is, however, a duty of every Muslim to offer condolence on the death of his brother (Muslim) and say words of sympathy and consolation to the members of the bereaved family. The neighbouring Muslims should supply provisions to the inmates of the deceased family's house for a few days till they recover from the shock and are in proper frame of mind to cook food with their own hands. This is *Mustahab* (laudable). Fellow-feeling, mutual sympathy and co-operation are the keynote of Islam

and form the principles of Islamic brotherhood. There is a Hadis:

"Whoso guides towards good, there is for him like the reward of one who acts up to it."

Therefore the reward of fellow-feeling and sympathy and no less than those awarded to the afflicted.

The reward of patience and forbearance on the death of blood relations and close friends is very great. However, the pain of separation is quite natural and therefore, mourning for at least three days is lawful. The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) said:

"Beware (O woman) from the noise of the devil. Then he said: Whatever occurs from the eye and from the heart is from the Almighty and Glorious Allah and from mercy; and what comes to pass from the hand and from the tongue is from the devil." (Ahmad)

We send our dead to the grave every day but do not really realise that oneday we too have to meet this fate; for death is inevitable. What preparations have we made for the difficult journey ahead where nothing will avail us except good deeds? Let not the devil seduce us in regard to accountability in the Hereafter. The Holy Qur'an warns:

"O man! What hath made thee careless concerning thy Lord, the Bountiful, Who created thee, then fashioned, then proportioned thee? Into whatsoever form He will, He casteth thee. Nay but they deny the Judgement. Lo! there are above you guardians, generous and recording, who know (all) that ye do. Lo! the righteous verily will be in delight. And lo! the wicked verily will be in Hell; they will burn therein on the Day of Judgement. And will not be absent thence."

"Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Day of Judgement is! Again, what will convey unto thee what the Day of Judgement is! A day on which no soul hath power at all for any (other) soul. The (absolute) command on that day is Allah's" (82: 6-19)

OBSERVE LIMITS OF DECENCY

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said:

"Every religion has a characteristic and the characteristic of Islam is Haya (modesty)." (Ibn Majah)

He also said:

"Verily, modesty and faith are inter-related; if one of them is taken out, the other goes away simultaneously." (Baihaqi)

That is to say that if modesty departs, *Iman* declines and goes out to that extent. That is how the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) on another occasion has observed:

"When one commits fornication, he is not a believer, when one steals; he is not a believer, when one drinks wine, he is not a believer, when one takes plunder on account of which men raise their eyes at him, he is not a believer; and when one of you defrauds, he is not a believer; so beware! beware!"

Yet many Muslims are inclined to take a most complacent attitude towards these moral and social crimes. They say: "We are young and healthy, so what is the hurry? We will seek *Taubah* when we are old and infirm and before dying." Thus a fornicator commits fornication with impunity, a drunkard indulges in drinking with

impunity, a thief commits repeated thefts with impunity and a corrupt official goes on taking bribe after bribe. This is an extremely dangerous trend, of which we have been warned by the Holy Qur'an in these words:

"Forgiveness is only incumbent on Allah toward those who do evil in ignorance (and) then turn quickly (in repentance) to Allah. These are they toward whom Allah relenteth. Allah is ever Knower, Wise."

"The forgiveness is not for those who do ill deeds until, when death attendeth upon one of them, he saith: Lo! I repent now; nor yet for those who die while they are disbelievers. For such we have prepared a painful doom."

(4: 17-18)

It is unfortunate that the modern society has come to acquire a maddening passion for the so-called amusements, sports, singing, dancing, swimming in bikinis and other types of mixed "entertainments" which not only stimulate and excite sexual passions but actually permit all types of sexualities. The "emancipated" woman has been tempted from all sides and has been reduced by the modern ways of life to abandon her right place in the world. The skin-tight dresses of today serve no other purpose but to exploit, exaggerate and embellish the sex appeal of the women who wear them. This semi-nudity is more harmful and exciting than the complete nudity of the savage races. Further, the decrease in fear of pregnancy owing to the discovery of contraceptives, the declining standard of modesty, the ill influence of modern social conditions, the early awakening to sexual consciousness in the modern teenage girl and above all the waning influence of morality in modern life are factors which are turning the modern woman into a "market item".

We are also shocked to observe this dangerous trend to trespass the limits of decency is not only to be found among those who don't profess to be the faithful one but those who are so-called respectable Muslim women. One would wonder when walking in a street or passing a cinema whether the ladies in extreme and daring fashions are actually on a parade wildly displaying their bodies.

Woman according to Islam was created to produce and nurse life. She was therefore endowed with numerous delicate qualities and relieved of outdoor activities. Unlike the life of a man full of rigorous tasks and strains, her's was to be the life of calm and restraint in which no excitement was to take place. She was destined to devote her life and energy in the rearing of a nation and the moulding of society. A nation begins with an infant and an infant starts with a mother.

Truly speaking, the fact is that whatever religious or secular progress or perfection the men achieve, the women have had a great part in it. The woman can indeed take pride in her domestic life. What a great nobility, honour and glory the Islamic *Shari'ah* has bestowed upon the women that the men have been told that their mothers' role is three times more important than that of their fathers'. Once someone asked the Prophet: "Whom should I treat as most important?" He answered "Your mother." He asked again; he said: "Your mother." And then he asked the third time and he said: "Your mother." He asked the fourth time, the Prophet said: "Your father."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The wife's role is summarised in the Qur'anic statement:

"And women shall have rights similar to the rights (of men) against them according to what is equitable; but men have a degree over them." (2: 228)

A Muslim woman, as a wife, enjoys privileges which are undreamed of by her Western counterpart. The saying of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in regard to her role as a wife is well known. *"The best among you is the one who is the best towards his wife."*

Kindness and affection to a wife is of paramount importance in the teachings of Islam which has made it incumbent upon a Muslim husband to provide her with a home, food and clothing. He is also required to pay due attention to her security and well-being. The parting words of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) were: *"Fear Allah with regard to matters concerning woman."*

In the eyes of Islam a woman is very precious and valuable, therefore she has to remain indoors where she could be hidden and guarded, just as precious and valuable assets are guarded and kept in safes, strong-rooms and vaults for safe keeping so that they do not fall into the hands of unauthorised persons. A woman who remains indoors does not easily become the victim of the evil eye, and evil forces.

Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"And remain indoors, and do not display your finery, ornaments and beauty to strangers in the manner of the women of the days of Jahiliyah (ignorance) and regularly perform Salat and pay Zakat; and obey Allah and his Rasool."

Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said:

"Verily the woman is an Aurah (anything that one conceals by reason of shame or prudency), whenever she

leaves her home the Sha'itan (devil) raises his eyes and looks towards her with expanded hands over his eyebrow like he who shades his eyes from the sun, the closest she is to her Rabb (Lord and Sustainer) when she is in the innermost part of her home."

During the propitious times of the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) women had the permission of going to the Mosque but at the same time there was also the instruction that "their homes are better than the mosques" (Mishkat, p.96). a devoted lady, Umm-e-Hameed pleaded with the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) that she was very fond of offering prayers behind him. He said, *"What you say is right, but it is better for you to offer prayer in a closed room than in the courtyard, your prayer in the courtyard is better than in the verandah and your offering the prayer in the Mosque of your own locality is better than your coming to our Mosque (Prophet's Mosque) for it."* Thereafter, Umm-e-Hameed fixed a dark room for offering prayers and continued offering prayers there till her death, never even once going to the mosque.

(Targhib, p. 180)

When Hazrat Umar's time came, he, seeing changes in women's condition (finery and use of perfumes and cosmetics), stopped those women who used to come to the Mosque for prayers and all the venerable Companions. — not a single one dissenting — concurred with him. However, some women complained of this to Hazrat 'Ayesha Siddiqa (Raziallahu Anha). She, too concurring with Hazrat Farouq's decision, remarked:

"Had the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) seen these things, which are being witnessed nowadays among the women, he too would have forbidden them from coming to the Mosque."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The initial permissibility of women's emergence for the purpose of attending the Mosque was conditioned with the various restrictions imposed by the *Shari'ah* such as the wearing of a *Jilbaab* (a large sheet used for covering the face and the entire body), the wearing of simple and unattractive clothes, the prohibition of perfumes, etc. Today, with the dispensing of the *Jilbaab* and the donning of fashionable and immodest apparel and the attendant laxity in upholding the Islamic demand of a segregation of the sexes, this permission (which was subject to the observance of strict conditions) automatically falls away. This is corroborated by the opinion expressed by Hazrat Ayesha (*Razial. au Anha*).

The usual argument advanced by some over-enthusiastic people is that it would be better for our Muslim sisters to attend congregational prayers at the Mosque rather than loitering at street corners and cafes during their free hours. This argument is untenable. The basic problem is the emergence of women from their homes to compete with men in the outside world of commerce and industry. Barring a small percentage, the majority of women have no real need to desert their homes thereby neglecting their primary duty of rearing a family and bringing their children up as good Muslims. Hence the problem can only be solved adequately if it is tackled at its roots. Rather than encouraging *purdah*-less women to attend the Mosque, why are they not taught to obey the following injunction of the Holy Qur'an:

"And stay within your homes, And do not make a display of yourselves like the displays of the Times of Ignorance." (33: 33)

The above *ayat* of the Qur'an provides the only true and real solution to the problem of Muslim women loiter-

ing at street corners and cafes during their free hours. Rather than trying to drag women into Mosques, why is the effort not directed towards discouraging them from emerging from their homes. This would be more compatible with Islamic reformation and in keeping with the demands of the above quoted injunction of the Qur'an.

Another pertinent question that comes to mind:

Is there a real and genuine need for women to leave the confines of their homes in order to work? In the majority of cases it is the parents or husbands who encourage their daughters or wives to go out and work with a view to increasing the family income so that they may compete with their neighbours or friends in enjoying the luxuries of "modern living" even though it be at the risk of losing their dignity and honour! Some women again take up jobs simply to escape the boredom of staying at home. There are, however, certain genuine cases (though limited to a few) where a family due to financial circumstances is compelled to send women out to work so that they could make both ends meet. Why do the advocates of female emancipation not divert their time, energy and money in creating some sort of home industries for such hard cases? Under the prevalent moral condition of Muslims the encouragement of women to attend Mosques instead of praying at home is certainly uncalled for and is an act that goes against the express wishes of the Holy Prophet (*Salallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) when viewed in the light of his sayings quoted above.

Hazrat Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) used to pelt women with gravel in order to drive them away from the Mosque on Friday (*Ainyi's Sharh-e-Bukhari*). It happened in those days when most women used to be extremely bashful, modest, pious and virtuous and the majority of men were

righteous; when there was a golden opportunity to acquire graces and blessings and when there was so much insistence on the superiority of the Prophet's Mosque and on performing the prayers with the congregation; in spite of this, women were stopped from coming to the Mosque. One can imagine what the regulation should be for the present times.

It is unfortunate that our women today are being dragged or enticed to take up jobs in firms, factories, films etc., and to participate in various programmes and activities which fall outside their natural domain. Child-bearing, child-rearing and housekeeping demand so much of the average woman's time and effort that she can virtually find no time to concentrate upon other activities, as man is able to do. They are taken ill more often than men partly due to their complex and ever changing reproductive system. Therefore, there is a certain amount of natural inequality between the two sexes. For this very reason Allah has never chosen women as prophets, nor has He permitted them to become *Imaams*, *Muazzins*, *Amirs* or leaders of the people. Allah's beloved Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has declared: *"A nation will never attain success whose control has been entrusted to a woman."* Rasulallah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has also said: *"Verily the destruction of men is in obeying their women."*

Rasulullah (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said:

"Three persons will never enter Jannat (Paradise): A person who does not bother who goes out with his wife; a woman who imitates a man; and an alcoholic addict."

Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported from the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) who said:

"A man shall never keep alone with a woman except that the third between them is the devil." (Tirmizi)

Let those who advocate free mixing of men and women ponder over this Hadis!

Jabir bin Abdullah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported: I asked Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) about the sudden glance (that is cast) on the face (of a non-Mahram). He commanded me that I should turn away my eyes.

(Muslim)

There is no sin for the glance that one casts accidentally upon a strange woman. The right course on that occasion is that one should turn away one's eyes from her. But if one fixes one's eyes upon her, and sees her deliberately, it is a sin. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has called those deliberate glances as the immodesty of the eye. Exception is, however, made in cases where there is a genuine need of looking at a woman, e.g. medical check-up, or at the time of recording witness, or at the occasion of investigation of crime and before contracting marriage with a woman.

Muawiya bin Sufyan (*Raziallahu Anho*) said that he heard the Messenger of Allah forbidding artificial hair and saying:

"That the people of Bani Israel were ruined at the time when their women wore such hair." (Muslim)

Adding false hair to the head has been prohibited in Islam since it is not only disgraceful but also a method of cheating the people.

Narrated Aisha (*Raziallahu Anho*): An Ansari woman gave her daughter in marriage. Her daughter's hair started falling. The Ansari woman came to the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) and said, "Her (my daughter's) husband

suggested that I should let her wear false hair." The Prophet said, "*No (don't do that) for Allah sends His curses upon such ladies who lengthen their hair artificially.*"

Bashfulness or shame is opposed to indecency or shamelessness. Shame is a branch of faith while indecency is out of faith. The Holy Prophet instructed us to guard ourselves from indecency because Allah does not like it. The Holy Qur'an has prohibited indecency in the following verses:

- (i) "*And follow not the footsteps of the devil. Lo! he is an open enemy for you. He enjoineth you only the evil and the foul.*" (2 : 168-169)
- (ii) "*...draw not nigh to lewd things whether open or concealed.*" (6 : 152)
- (iii) "*Say: My Lord hath forbidden only indecencies such of them as are apparent and such as are within, and sin and wrongful oppression and that ye associate with Allah that for which no warrant hath been revealed and that ye tell concerning Allah that which ye know not.*" (7: 33)

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Modesty is a part of faith and faith is in Paradise, and obscenity is a part of hardness of heart and hardness of heart is in the fire." (Ahmad & Tirmizi)

Abu Said (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"A man must not look at a man's private parts or a woman at a woman's, and a man must not come close

to a man in one garment or a woman to a woman in one garment." (Muslim)

Ibn Masud (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"A woman must not come in close contact with another and then describe her to her husband, for that is as if he were looking at her." (Bukhari & Muslim)

Abdullah bin Masud reported that Allah cursed the females who mark with tattoos and who mark others with tattoos, and who pluck out hairs and who chaff their feet for beauty and who change the creation of Allah. A woman came to him and said: It has reached me that you have cursed such and such a person. He said: What is for me that I will not curse one whom the Messenger of Allah cursed and about whom there is in the Book of Allah. She said: I have read what is between the two tablets (i.e., the whole of it) but I have not found therein what you say. He said: if you had read it, you would have certainly found it. Have you not read: *"Accept whatever the Prophet gives you and desist from whatever he prohibits you"* (Qur'an, 59: 7)? 'Yes' she said. He said: Verily he has prohibited it.

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The hymn (*tasbeeh*) of some of the Angels is:

"Holy is the Being Who adorned men with beard and women with braid."

It is, however, very disgusting that today men by shaving their beards and women by trimming their hair are foolishly removing from their faces and heads respectively signs of sublime grace and beauty in the sight of Allah!

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in one of the ahadis said that *he has no connection with one who*

shaves (her head). This used to be the practice in the days of Ignorance. In modern times this practice has been replaced by trimming hair in various styles and so many of our fashionable ladies flock to beauty parlours which are doing a roaring business.

“Ali (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah prohibited women to shave their head.” (Nisai)

It is equally prohibited that some long tuft of hair should be kept in front or back or that the hair of the back should be made shorter. But Alas! Today Muslim women feel proud of doing exactly the reverse of what has been commanded by the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)!

Ibn-e-Umar reported that the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

“Allah cursed the female who takes false hairs and who dresses others with false hairs and who marks herself with tattoos and who marks others with tattoos.”

(Bukhari & Muslim)

Ibn-e-Abbas reported that the woman who wears false hair and the woman dresses (others) with false hair, and the woman who plucks out her hair and who plucks out the hair of others and the woman who puts on tattoo-marks and the woman who causes to put on tattoo marks on others without any disease are cursed. (Abu Daud)

Same reported that the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) cursed the males who take the form of females and the females who take the form of males. He said: *Drive them out from your houses.* (Bukhari)

Same reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

“Allah cursed the males who appear like females and the females who appear like males.” (Bukhari)

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah cursed the man who puts on dress of a woman, and woman who puts on dress of man.

(Abu Daud)

It is related that Hazrat Ayesha (*Raziallahu Anha*) was too strictly against music. She would not even stand the tinkling made by bells around the necks of camels. If any note would reach her ears, she would ask the camel driver to stop so that the tinkling of the bells would also cease.

Compare this with the ardent love for music in this modern age. Our ladies feel uncomfortable if they do not listen to music and songs from radio, gramophone and television etc. They cannot take bath even without music playing on!

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as recorded by Tirmizi and Abu Dawood said:

"A woman who applies perfume and goes to a gathering is like an adulteress."

Compare this with the craze of our women who go in mixed parties with transparent or short dresses dipped in costly perfumes while the Qur'an wants them to lower their gaze and be modest:

".... and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands...."

(24: 31)

It is unfortunate that despite the clear and strong injunctions of Allah and His Messenger about the high standard of morality, our women are prone to exhibitionism and semi-nudity. This reminds one the following warning of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) about fashion-crazy women which should serve as an eye-opener to all concerned.

It is reported from Hazrat Ibn Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) that the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) had said that the women who wear fine clothes which show out their body and attract man with their make-up and are themselves attracted towards men, they are only outwardly dressed but are naked from inside. They deserve condemnation. They are all accursed. (Hakim)

Attracting women are those who use strong perfumes so that wherever they go men are naturally attracted towards them. Some of them do such things that men certainly look at them, such as raising their voices or coughing. In some reports the words used are that their heads are like the camel's hump, which means that they wrap their heads with a scarf while their whole body remains open, or they tie their hair heavily or spray something into it to keep it tied up or like Arab women who stick other hair into their own hair to make it look longer or in combing it raise up the middle portion thereof. The reference is to such things. Anyway such makeup or decoration, which is not permitted and is generally intended for non-Mahram (stranger) men to see, is condemnable and the result of condemnation is hell.

Today the woman is increasingly being used as a means of amusing and entertaining strangers. What surprises one is that she feels no shame or qualms in showing her nakedness! The woman is instinctively modest and bashful but she shamelessly strips herself in clubs, parks and on television. Does she feel glad in doing so or has she to make a show of gladness in showing off her semi-naked body? In return for all this she gets "fame". Today, there are many sympathisers of women but most of them are devils in the garb of human beings. They have no interest in women's education or welfare; they are interested

only in her person. When there is no one to check or chide her, how can the woman protect herself or save her honour? Because she is free, how can anyone dare to tell or advise her as to how she can preserve her honour and chastity?

Liberty has intoxicated the woman. She has lost her sense and balance. She cares little for her honour, chastity and modesty. And all those enamoured of Western standard believe her liberty consists in her shamelessness and immodesty. This is true, because in spite of her shameless and immodesty. This is true, because in spite of her shameless and imbalanced life, all seem to be convinced that woman must be free (from the bends of religion) and live freely although her so-called freedom has reduced her to the position of a slave-girl. Only the sensible and faithful — because they fear Allah and are afraid of the Holy Prophet's displeasure — take a lesson from this state of affairs:

Hazrat Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that he heard Allah's Messenger say:

"Among the signs of the Last Hour will be removal of knowledge, the abundance of ignorance, the prevalence of fornication, the prevalence of wine, drinking, the small number of men and large number of women, so that fifty women will have one man to look after them."

(Bukhari and Muslim)

May Allah reform our men and women and bestow grace upon them to understand their rights and obligations. Ameen!

HOW ESSENTIAL IS HIJAB (VEIL)

THE Almighty Allah has laid down many duties and obligations in Islam which are to be carried out by Muslims. Performance of *Salat*, payment of *Zakat*, observance of *Saum* (in *Ramazan*) and Pilgrimage to Makkah have been enjoined upon the Faithful. Similarly, Almighty Allah has *Hijab* (Veil) for Muslim women and made un-veiling and free mixing (with males) unlawful for them. For safeguarding their chastity and honour, blueprints have been given for their dress, manners of walking and talking to others so that nothing could be left chance which may disrupt the healthy moral growth of the society.

There are several verses in *Surah Al-Ahzab* regarding the injunction of *Hijab* (veil) for Muslim women. For instance:

"O Prophet! Tell thy wives and thy daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them (when they go abroad). That will better so that they may be recognised and not annoyed. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful." (33: 59)

And non-recognition is possible only by covering the entire body *including the face*. This purpose is served only by an overdress called *Jilbaab*. The injunction pertaining to *Hijab* has been further elaborated in another verse of *Surah Al-Ahzab* the English translation of which reads:

"O ye who believe! Enter not the dwellings of the Prophet for a meal without waiting for the proper time, unless permission be granted you. But if ye are invited, enter, and, when your meal is ended, then disperse. Linger not for conversation. Lo! that would cause annoyance to The Prophet, and he would be shy of (asking) you (to go); but Allah is not shy of the truth. And when ye ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts. And it is not for you to cause annoyance to the Messenger of Allah..."

(Qur'an 33: 53)

According to the commentators of the Qur'an, this verse has come to be known as *Hijab verse* because the injunction has been made explicit in this verse so much that if anything, under necessity, has to be demanded from womenfolk, it should be asked for from behind the curtain. In this way the free mixing of men and women has been clearly prohibited and made unlawful in no uncertain terms.

Despite these clear injunctions of the Holy Qur'an, the modernists today are waging a relentless war against the *Ulema* to "emancipate the woman" and "liberate" her from slavery of the *Hijab* so that she may "march with the times" by exposing her denuded body to the vulgar gaze of the strangers. These apologetic and misguided people are clamouring for the right of the woman to leave her home to compete with men in the commercial world, thereby neglecting her primary role of rearing a wholesome family and bringing her in contact with strange men who stare at her with lust and pass indecent remarks. Many women who were leading chaste and restrained lives have been lured to evil and filth by the propaganda snares and gullies of the modernists who now have the

audacity to point an accusing finger at the *Ulema* for evils and problems they themselves have created....

Although Islam granted women permission to go out on condition that they strictly observed various restrictions imposed upon them by the Divine Law, it still encouraged them to stay indoors for moral purity and decorum as the following Hadis conclusively proves:

Ibn Masud reported the Messenger of Allah as saying:

"A woman is object concealment for when she goes out, the devil presents her in alluring looks before men." (Tirmizi)

This Hadis emphasises the need to observe *Hijab* (veil) in order to nip the evil in the bud. Also we read in the Qur'an:

"And stay in your houses. Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizenment of the Time of Ignorance. Be regular in prayers, and pay the poor due and obey Allah and His Messenger." (33: 33)

Bedizenment, i.e., exposure of a woman and her charm and beauty to other men is a pointer to her moral laxity. To the extent that our women are ignorant or resentful of the teachings of Islam, they will be prone to bedizenment of the Time of Ignorance and will bear close resemblance with Jewish and Christian women. The real worth of a woman, however, is not on account of her beauty, expensive dress or make-up but her piety. The Qur'an says:

"Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct." (49: 13)

The day Muslim women discarded their veil under the impact of Westernisation they lost respect at that very

moment because the overdress is not simply a piece of long cloth but a crow of her dignity and prestige. This piece of cloth is in fact a proof of her gentle and God-fearing nature. As against this exhibitionism and be-dizenment are those possible weapons which are striking at the morals of Muslim *Ummah* (community) and like a double edge sword slaughtering decent conduct mercilessly.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said that eyes also commit fornication and the fornication of eyes consists in casting sensual looks. It means that sensual looks are a partial source of satisfaction for sex-hunger. Every limb of the female body has a charm and attraction for the opposite sex. But no part stimulates the desire more than her face. That is why people cast evil glances at a beautiful woman but do not look at an ugly woman although in essence both are the same as far as womanhood is concerned.

The unchaste and lewd women are of two types: one, those who openly sell their bodies and second, those who prostitute their charms — that is, they allow on-lookers to witness and praise their outward beauty for their satanic ego-satisfaction and thus the vile men derive mental pleasure from watching the scantily dressed bodies of such ladies dipped in expensive cosmetics and perfumes. Although these women do not want to be assaulted by the passers-by, their very sight sends thrill into the body stirring hidden passions, which lead to emotional imbalance leading to moral depravity and crime.

That is why the Holy Qur'an has first ordained Muslim men "*to lower their gaze and be modest*" (24: 30) and then similarly ordained Muslim women "*to lower their gaze and be modest*" (24: 31). It implies that the first

source of moral corruption is the unrestricted gaze. Therefore, it is binding on a God-fearing Muslim to guard his looks. The Holy Prophet Las said:

1. *"There is no Muslim who casts a first glance, at the charms of a woman and then shuts up his eye-sight but Allah creates anew for him one divine service in which he finds relish."* (Ahmad)
2. *"There are three types of eyes whom hell fire will not touch — the eye which keeps itself shut from the things forbidden by Allah, the eye which guards the frontiers of Islam and remains open to keep vigil over it and the eye which constantly sheds tears out of Allah's fear."* (Tirmizi)
3. *"The fornication of the eyes consists in looking, of ears in hearing, of the tongue in speech, of the hand in violence, and of the foot in walking. The heart lusts and wishes and the private parts accord with that or reject it."* (Muslim)

But unfortunately these instructions are disregarded today. For can someone say with confidence that Muslim men lower their gaze upon seeing strange women? Or conversely could anybody say that nowadays Muslim women draw their cloaks round them when they go out and do not reveal their beauty to others? The answer is a big NO rather they leave hardly anything which can possibly be exposed right from glowing hairstyle, fascinating make-up, tight alluring dress and what not! The sexual desire awakens when it is left to itself and the sex hunger reaches its heights when it is led to witness scenes of such tempting beauties. The Muslim woman is heedless of the colossal harm that she is doing to her by anti-Islamic behaviour besides dragging others to the pits of evil. For how long a man can control his passions when lust-

provoking scenes are all around? Let Muslim women lend ears to Holy Prophet, (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) warning who said:

"Allah curses one who looks (with lust) and who is looked upon?" (Baihaqi)

And the Holy Qur'an proclaims:

- (i) *"Woe unto each sinful liar, who heareth the revelations of Allah receive unto him, and then continueth in pride, as though he heard them not. Give him tidings of a painful doom."* (47: 7)
- (ii) *"Bad is the name of lewdness after faith. And whoso turneth not in repentance, such are evil-doers."* (49: 11)
- (iii) *"Lo! those who keep away from evil dwell amid gardens and water springs. Taking that which their Lord giveth them; for lo! aforetime they were doers of good; they used to sleep but little of the night, and before the dawning of each day would seek forgiveness, and in their wealth the beggar and the outcast had due share."* (51: 19)

A Muslim woman who means to follow the commands of Allah and His Prophet faithfully, and who is not prepared to get involved in a scandal or molestation can decide for herself which way to choose. Allah has enjoined on the Muslim woman that when they go out of their houses under some necessity, they should cover their faces by drawing a part of their over-garment over their heads in order that they are not recognised and annoyed.

The person who understands the aims of *Shari'ah* (Islamic Law) and also has some common sense cannot fail to see that allowing woman the freedom to move about with uncovered faces runs counter to the objectives

held so dear by Islam. The face is the most impressive thing in the human body. It is the index of the natural human charms, the most attractive part and the one possessing great sex appeal for others. That is why if one has to marry a girl, one desires to see her face, if nothing else. If one is shown the whole figure of a girl but not her face, one is not satisfied. This shows that the beauty of the face is by far the most important thing in the human body.

However, the modernists who are out for the abolition of *Hijab* bring forward the explanation of the commentators of the Qur'an who have interpreted the Qur'anic verse: "*And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that what is apparent*" (24: 31) in the context of *Satr** where a woman can uncover her face, hands and feet before others. It is, however, not realised by these modernists that this verse pertains to *Satr* and not *Hijab* and the two are entirely different things. *Hijab* (veil) is to be observed from strange men while *Satr* relates to the covering of body.

* *Star*, according to Shari'ah, are the parts of a person which are unlawful to expose – these are between the naval and the knee for a male and the entire body for a female except the face and the hands as far as the wrists.

The female voice, according to Islam, is also included in the category of *Satr*, i.e., it has to be concealed and not revealed. The Almighty Allah, the Creator, is well aware of the lure for men which exists in female voice, hence women in Islam are not permitted to raise their voices when speaking; they are not permitted to recite the Qur'an aloud if men are in the vicinity. When necessity demands that they have to speak to males, then their speech should not be attractive, soft and alluring like the deliberate "lure" put in speech by trained receptionist women of the *Kuffar*. Recognising the danger of allurement in the female voices, the Holy Qur'an commands woman thus: "*And do not speak in alluring tones so that he in whose heart there is disease (of lust) desires.*"

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Here (*i.e.*, *Satr*) there are certain exceptions and a woman in her domestic life can permissibly expose some parts of the body like, face, hands, and feet before her near relations.

Zinat (as occurred in this verse) means both natural beauty and artificial ornaments. The woman is asked not to make a display of her figure except to the following classes of people: (1) her husband, (2) her near relatives who would be living in the same house; (3) her maid servants; (4) slaves, male and female, as they would be constant attendance but this item would now be blank, with the abolition of slavery; (5) old or infirm men-servant; and (6) infants and small children who have no idea of sex.

The question of *Hijab* (as distinct from *Satr*) whereas is dealt at length in a number of verses of *Surah Al-Ahzab* already quoted. It is, therefore, absurd to draw inference from the verse (24: 31) relating to *Satr* that Islam does not require its womenfolk to observe *Hijab*. One needs to reflect that the Qur'an which has prohibited women

The indulgences in "diplomatic" alluring speech by women is a cause of raising amorous hope in the listener, as speech of women is an important source of sexual excitation. Islam has, hence, forbidden its women to speak in a soft or "sexually" sweet tone. If anyone is aware of the springs of sex-psychology, he will clearly see the justification of Islam's restriction in this matter.

The Messenger of Allah said:

"The *Zina* (fornication) of the ears is to listen (to songs immodest speech and illicit sex talks of cinema and Television), the *Zina* of the tongue is to speak (what is evil or seduce others into evil) . . ."

(Muslim)

The *Zina* committed by limbs (*i.e.*, eyes, ears, hands, feet, heart, and sexual organs will speak for themselves on the Day of *Qiyamat*. The Holy Qur'an says:

"This day We seal up mouths and hands speak out and feet bear witness as to what they used to earn." (36: 64)

to tinkle their ankle ornaments in order to draw attention to themselves, how can it tolerate to leave the face open which is the main source of attraction? The *Shari'ah* has very clearly laid down the rule of *Hijab* in the verse: "*And when ye ask of them anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain*" (33: 53) because Islam wants that a woman should be a *Zinat* for her house only and not give satanic forces a chance to seduce her and through her tempt others to commit foul deeds.

Let us, therefore, not weaken the institution of *Hijab* (veil) which is not only an important pillar in the social system of Islam but also a bulwark against the sex anarchy, especially of the present age. Islam intends to eradicate immorality from the start. Therefore, it was enjoined on the woman to cover the face with veil so as to insure her against men staring at her in an innocent way. Since the object is to curb indecency and obscenity, how on earth it can be reasonable then to close all the minor ways to indecency but to fling the main gate (*i.e.*, face) wide open?

Let the modernists ponder over the following Hadis: Hazrat Umm Salmah (*Raziallahu Anha*) related one day she was sitting with the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) along with Hazrat Maimunah (Hazrat Aisha *Raziallahu Anha* according to another version) when Hazrat Ibn Maktum (*Raziallahu Anho*), who was a blind man, called on the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) told them to observe *Purdah* from him. Hazrat Umm Salmah said: "*Is he not a blind man? Neither will he see us, nor recognise us.*" The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: "*Are you also blind? Do you not see him.*"

(Tirmizi)

Indeed, all the disputes about the veil spring from hypocrisy. A person who is conversant with Qur'an, Hadis

and Islamic history cannot dare deny the fact that *Shari'ah* enjoins on the woman to hide her face from the other people, and this has been the practice of the Muslim women even since the time of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) himself which was the time of the highest moral purity and discipline. It is all the more needed now when the society is at the lowest ebb. Though the veil has not been described in shape in the Qur'an, it is Qur'anic in spirit. The Muslim women living at the time of the Holy Prophet to whom the Qur'an was revealed had made it a regular part of their dress outside the houses and even at that time it was called *Niqab*, the veil. But people enamoured of Western concepts of 'progress' and 'civilisation' cannot sincerely follow a religion that prohibits its women from becoming society girls which inculcates *Haya* (modesty), chastity and which forbids the queen of the house to become the "Object of Beauty" for others outside the house. The things which are held as highly important and valuable in the West are indeed of little or no value in the eyes of Islam and vice versa:

"And (He commandeth you, saying): This is My straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest ye be parted from this way. This hath He ordained for you, that ye may ward off evil. (Qur'an, 6: 154)

DO NOT GET ENGROSSED IN WORLDLY TRASH

Umar bin al-Khattab (*Raziallahu Anho*) narrated: The Messenger of Allah was lying on the mat and there was nothing between him and that (mat), and under his head there was a pillow made of leather and it was stuffed with palm fibres and at his feet were lying a heap of sant tree

(acacia nilociica, meant for dyeing) and near his head was hanging a hide. And I saw the marks of the mat on the side of Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him and so I wept. He said: What makes you weep? I said: Messenger of Allah, the Khusrau and the Caesars (Persians and Romans) spend their lives in the midst of (luxuries), whereas you being Allah's Messenger (are leading your life in this poverty). Thereupon Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said: Don't you like that they should have riches of their world, and you have the Hereafter.

(Muslim)

In this context the Holy Qur'an says:

"Lo! Allah will cause those who believe and do good works to enter Gardens underneath which rivers flow: while those who disbelieve take their comfort in this life and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire is their habitation."

(47: 12)

This does not however mean that a Muslim is destined to lead a life of want and poverty in this world and a non-Muslim a life of plenty and luxury. What it implies is that a Muslim should live up to the higher ideals — salvation in the Hereafter — and should not run after petty ends of the material world. A Muslim should always keep before him the lofty spiritual heights and should not allow himself to be entangled by the snares of the worldly life. It is quite natural to conceive that a person who has the goal of eternal salvation before him cannot attach any importance to material things. On the other hand, the person who looks upon the material comforts and worldly riches as the highest achievements of his life is spiritually impoverished and a great loser in the Hereafter.

The Qur'an aptly records the conversation between the dwellers of Paradise and the inhabitants of Hell where

the latter narrate their shortcomings and misdeeds which drove them to the Hell-fire in these awe-inspiring words:

"In Gardens they will ask one another concerning the guilty: What hath brought you to this burning? They will answer: We were not of those who prayed nor did we feed the wretched. We used to wade (in vain dispute) with (all) waders, and used to deny the Day of Judgement, till the inevitable came unto us." (74: 40-47)

We should, therefore, learn a lesson from this short-lived life and sincerely repent for our past sins and lapses and earnestly prepare ourselves for the Hereafter, which is the real and eternal life. The Qur'an finds a way-out for our past weakness and sinfulness when it advises:

- (i) *"Say, O My slaves who have been prodigal to their own hurt! Despair not the mercy of Allah, Who forgiveth all sins. Lo! He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. Turn unto Him repentant, and surrender unto Him, before there comes unto you the doom, when ye cannot be helped."* (39: 53-54)
- (ii) *"(Triumphant) are those who turn repentant (to Allah), those who serve (Him), those who praise (Him), those who fast, those who bow down, those who fall prostrate (in worship), those who enjoin the right and who forbid the wrong and those who keep the limits (ordained) by Allah."* (9 : 112)

We hanker nowadays after riches and aspire to pile up worldly belongings like modern electrical appliances, furniture, crockery and foodstuffs, while Hazrat 'Aisha (Raziallahu Anha) tells us as recorded in Bukhari and Muslim that *"Muhammad's family did not have enough barely bread to satisfy them on two consecutive days up to the time when Allah's Messenger was taken in death."*

It is reported that when Hazrat Salman (a companion of Holy Prophet *Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) was on the verge of death, he wept profusely. Someone tried to console him and said that soon he will be meeting Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) who was well pleased with him at the time of his passing from this world but Hazrat Salman (*Raziallahu Anho*) told him that he was neither weeping because of the fear of death nor because of departure from this world. In fact the real cause of his weeping was that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) took an oath from them (i.e., his companions) that they would live in this world like a passing traveller without acquiring worldly belongings except to the extent required by a traveller. He was sorry and mournful for his failure to abide by this oath. However, on his death it was found that the value of all the belongings in his house was a little more than 10 *Dirhams*. These were all his assets which he considered to be in excess. It is time that we did a little soul-searching and took stock of our belongings.

Al-Mustaurid bin Shaddad (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that he heard Allah's Messenger saying:

"I swear by Allah that this world in-comparison with the world to come is just like one of you putting his finger into the sea. Let him consider what he brings out on it."

(Muslim)

A finger comes with nothing from water. Therefore, a person engrossed in this world being forgetful of the next world will find nothing for him in the next world. The worldly comforts are transient and short-lived. Thus one should neither be proud of worldly possessions nor complain for the lack of these because in the words of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*):

"The world is accursed and what it contains is accursed, except remembrance of Allah and what He likes, a learned man or a learner."

(Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)

Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) told that when Allah's Messenger came upon a dead lamb whose ear had been cut off, he asked who would like to have it for a Dirham. On receiving the reply that they would not want it at any price, he said, *"I swear by Allah that the world is more contemptible in Allah's sight than this (dead lamb) is in yours."*

(Muslim)

Sahl bin Sa'd (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"If the world were equivalent to a gnat's wing in Allah's sight, He would not give an infidel a drink of it."

(Ahmad, Tirmizi and Ibn Majah)

This then is the worth of the world to which we are so fondly attached to our utter disadvantage!

Hazrat Abu Huraira (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"Hell is veiled by desirable things and Paradise is veiled by disagreeable things."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

This means that following lust and worldly pleasures, which are sweet and alluring end up in Hell. On the other hand, entry to Paradise is possible by overcoming one's baser self, i.e., resisting evil temptations and shunning sensual pleasures which though a difficult task merits great reward in the Hereafter.

The above *ahadis* should serve as an eye opener for us. Time and again we are told in the Holy Qur'an to realise the worth and significance of the life-Hereafter and to prepare ourselves for it in the right earnest. Allah says:

- (i) *"Whoso desireth that (life) which hasteneth away. We hasten for him therein that we will for whom we please. And afterward We have appointed for him hell; he will endure the heat thereof, condemned, rejected."* (17 : 18)
- (ii) *"And whoso desireth the Hereafter and striveth for it with the effort necessary, being a believer; for such their effort findeth favour (with their Lord)."* (17: 19)
- (iii) *"Whoso desireth the harvest of the Hereafter, We give him increase in its harvest. And whoso desireth the harvest of the world, We give him thereof, and he hath no portion in the Hereafter."* (42 : 20)

The Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) read the above mentioned verse of the Qur'an (42: 20) and said

"Allah says: O son of Adam, devote yourself to worship, and I will deliver your bosom of the worldly anxieties, and will remove your poverty; otherwise, I will fill your heart with a thousand worries and will not remove your poverty."

This is further supported by verse 124 of Surah Ta-Ha, which reads:

"But he turneth away from remembrance of Me, his will be a narrow life." (Qur'an, 20: 124)

It should be emphasised that our life in this world is short-lived. Therefore, we should try our best to reform ourselves and to instruct others because in this age there is a day-to-day decline in our love for Islam. The obligatory duties are being neglected not only by the common Muslims but also more so by those who hold high positions in the society. Millions of the Muslims have in-

dulged in manifest polytheism, not to speak of neglecting prayer, fasting and payment of Zakat; yet they are never conscious of their practices in polytheism. Trespassing the religious limits appears to be the order of the day. In the circumstances it is all the more essential for those "*whose hearts fear when Allah is mentioned*" to group themselves and re-kindle the flame of faith in the heart of Muslims. Everything that has been forbidden by Allah and the Holy Prophet must be avoided. Remember that every sin is a root for other sins, which promotes corruption in our domestic life as well as in the society. Let us then harken to the Divine Call before it is too late:

"O ye who believe! If you keep your duty to Allah, He will give you discrimination (between right and wrong) and will rid you of your evil thoughts and deeds, and will forgive you. Allah is of infinite bounty."

(Qur'an, 8: 29)

WEALTH AND WOMEN ARE A GREAT TRIAL

We read in the Qur'an:

- (i) *"O ye who believe! Let not your wealth nor your children distract you from the remembrance of Allah. Those who do so, they are the losers."* (63 : 9)
- (ii) *"O ye who believe! Lo! among your wives and your children there are enemies for you, therefore beware of them. And if ye efface and overlook and forgive, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful."*

"Your wealth and your children are only a temptation, whereas Allah! With Him is an immense reward. So keep your duty to Allah as best ye can, and

listen and obey, and spend; that is better for your souls. And whoso is saved from his own greed, such are the successful." (64: 14-16)

(iii) *"Wealth and children are an ornament of life of the world. But the good deeds which endure are better in thy Lord's sight for reward, and better in respect of hope."* (18: 47)

(iv) *"And know that your possessions and your children are a test and that with Allah is immense reward."* (8: 28)

(v) *"As for that Abode of the Hereafter We assign it unto those who seek not oppression in the earth, nor yet corruption. The End is (best) for the righteous."* (28: 83)

(vi) *"Beautified for mankind is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring, and stored-up heaps of gold and silver, and horses branded (with their mark), and cattle and land. That is comfort of the life of the world, Allah! With Him is a more excellent abode.*

Say: Shall I inform you of something better than that? For those who keep from evil, with their Lord, are Gardens underneath which rivers flow, and pure companions, and contentment from Allah. Allah is Seer of His bondmen, those who say: Our Lord! we believe. So forgive us our sins and guard us from the punishment of Fire; the steadfast, and the truthful, and the obedient, those who spend (and hoard not), those who pray for pardon in the watches of the night." (3: 14-17)

(vii) *"Know that the life of this world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you,*

and rivalry in respect of wealth and children; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman, but afterward it drieth up and thou seest it turning yellow, then it becometh straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure, whereas the life of the world is but matter of illusion." (57 : 20)

The Messenger of Allah said:

"Verily for every nation there was a (special) test and the test for my Ummah is wealth." (Tirmizi)

It should be noted that Allah's grace does not imply material riches. Mere possession of wealth is not grace of Allah. Wealth is a trial for men. If he spends it on good purposes and that too for seeking the pleasure of Allah alone, that is a grace of Allah, but if he squanders it away on immoral pursuits, and does not perform the duties, which its possession lays upon him, it is a symbol of the wrath of Allah.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Wealth is not in vast riches but wealth is in self-contentment." (Bukhari and Muslim)

Discontentment arises mostly out of greed for more and more wealth. Discontentment in nations arises out of greed for more political power and extensive territories. It is therefore said: *"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."* The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has said, *"Two hungry wolves do not do so much havoc to a flock of sheep as greed and desire do to one's religion."*

(Tirmizi)

Rank and position gained through unethical practices are highly harmful to one's interest in this world not to speak of those in the Hereafter. From the worldly point of view he invites himself to insecurity and danger and from the religious point of view, a person tossing the whip of Authority gets puffed up with pride, which means his spiritual ruin.

Abu Umama (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"The most enviable of my friends in my estimation is a believer with little property who finds pleasure in prayer, who performs the worship of his Lord well, who obeys Him in secret, who is obscure among men, who is not pointed out by people, and whose provision is bare sufficiency with which he is content." He then snapped his fingers and said: *"His death will come speedily, the women who bewail him will be few, and what he leaves will be little."* (Ahmad, Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)

The above Hadis beautifully sums up the blissful life of a true Muslim. Almighty Allah has warned those who hanker after power and position (through the acquisition of ill-gotten wealth) meet a miserable end. When, however, authority is vested in one by Allah without his asking for it, it is indeed a blessing from Allah and He (Allah) does protect him from its ill effects. One should desire a position and a status in life, which he can feel safe in carrying out his religious as well as social duties.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) by a way of warning and as a reminder had said: *"There is nothing left after I go more dangerous to men than the temptation of women."* The "unveiling" of women in our times and the consequent free mixing of sexes with all its attendant evils and immodest dress of our women have thrown the

Muslim countries in a whirlpool of incurable social and moral ailments. And there is no denying the fact that there is no greater temptation than the temptation of women. The temptation of money, power, prestige, and dominance all dwarf before the temptation of woman.

Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah told his companions:

"The woman advances and returns in the shape of a devil, so when one of you sees a woman, he should come to his wife, for that will repel what he feels in his heart." (Muslim)

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) in order to give practical guidance to his companions in the matter of the promptings of sex told them to go to their wives under such conditions as sexual repression is no good remedy for it. Sexual instinct is an innate impulse of man and it should be satisfied by legitimate means, and one should not indulge in immoral acts. Sexual repression leads to inhibitions of the mind and causes perversion in human nature. Islam has, therefore, suggested its healthy outlet rather than repression. The sentence that *"a woman advances and returns in the shape of a devil"* should not be misconstrued in the sense that Islam regards woman as a devil. What it means is that at times the (sudden) glance at a woman arouses sexual lust of a man, which may impel him to commit sin, and at times a man is so much enamoured and charmed by the looks of a woman that even her reminiscence excites his baser self.

Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"A man must not spend the night in the house of a woman who has been married unless he is her husband or a close relative." (Muslim)

Umar reported the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) as saying:

"Whenever a man is alone with a woman, the devil makes a third." (Tirmizi)

The devil fans sexual desire whenever a man meets a woman in privacy. That is why Islam is deadly against courtship and dating before marriage.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said:

"Do not call on women in the absence of their husbands, because Sha'itan might be circulating in anyone of you like blood." (Tirmizi)

It is significant to note that when calling on or sitting with married women is prohibited, the gravity of sin in meeting an unmarried woman can be well imagined. There are more chances of one's being led astray in the company of an unmarried woman as compared to the company of a married woman. These ahadis also show how Islam is vehemently opposed to the mixing of males and females, and thus of co-education and joint meetings of men and women where there are ample chances that they may induce each other to sin and transgression in one way or the other.

Abu Said al-Khudri (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying:

"The world is sweet and verdant, and Allah having put you in it in your turn watches how you act; so fear the world and fear women, for the first trial of the Bani Israel had to do with woman." (Muslim)

It means that Israelites left their own wives and indulged in merry making with other women. The narrative

says that when Prophet Musa at the head of Israelites went to wage war (*Jihad*) against the tribe of Jabbareen and reached Can'an, then the beautiful girls of that nation intruded in the army of Prophet Musa according to a pre-planned scheme. One of the leaders of Israelites upon seeing a beautiful girl fell in love with her and brought her before Prophet Musa and enquired whether the girl is lawful into him. Prophet Musa advised him not to go near that, as she is absolutely unlawful for him. That Israelite leader, however, disobeyed Prophet Musa and took the girl to his camp where he cohabited with her. This act of fornication invited the wrath of Allah and in no time seventy thousand Israelites perished in the battlefield.

Just see how the fulfilment of sexual desire outside marriage of a single person brought such a grave destruction. Are we not treading a similar fatal path when many of our married brethren leave their wives at homes and make love affairs with other ladies? How can there be peace, amity and affection in our homes? The earlier we wake up to our folly, the better for us lest we meet the same fate of Israelites as related above.

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"Love of the world is the beginning of every sin."

The world is like a beautiful unchaste woman. So the people of the world should be careful of the coquetties of this alluring commodity. There is also a great prophecy in the above quoted Hadis to the effect that Muslims shall be made rulers over major portion of the world so long as they will do justice to the people and live simple lives but as soon as these things will be wanting among Muslims, they will lose kingdoms. See how prophetic was the announcement and literally it came to be fulfilled!

Truly the Qur'an has said:

"And if Allah willed He could have punished them (dis-beliveers) without you but (thus it is ordained) that He may try some of you by means of others." (47: 4)

"And if ye turn away, He will exchange you for some other folks, and they will not be the likes of you." (47: 38)

TIRADE AGAINST POLYGAMY

MONOGAMY is the rule in Islam while polygamy is an allowance made for ardent human nature. Indeed man is polygamous in nature. It is Islam, which legalised up to a certain limit the number of such polygamous intercourse on the strict condition of equal treatment among several wives. Qur'anic verses 3 and 129 of Surah *An-Nisa* refer. Therefore, polygamy with reservation is surely better than secret associations with women.

The modern Muslim women who are agitating for the abolition of polygamy in some of the Muslim countries should, therefore, understand and appreciate the stand taken by Islam to meet the exigencies of time and human nature. The following are some of the vital and perplexing problems, which can be honourably solved by polygamy and about which the champions of monogamy observe meaningful silence:

1. Decrease in population due to war or natural calamities as happened in the early days of Islam. After the battle of *Uhud*, when male members were killed, the widows were large in numbers. Polygamy was, therefore, encouraged in order to give a protection to the helpless widows. This measure also saved immorality of the society that would have possibly been created by the existence of a large number of young widows. After the World Wars I & II, the necessity of polygamy was keenly felt. Prostitution is on the increase with the ad-

vancement of civilisation, and morganatic and left handed sexual intercourse are prevalent in the present European societies and eating them like a cancer with its concomitant increase of bastardy. These evils are unknown to countries where polygamy is prevalent.

2. Greater number of women than men. In a society with excess women population, woman will suffer injustice either because of starvation or malnutrition or because of their misuse out of wedlock, if polygamy is not allowed. The choice is not between monogamy and polygamy. The choice is between official polygamy and promiscuous intercourses — the consequences of the latter are too well known for any comment.
3. Barrenness or chronic illness of wife which may render her incapable of sex-relations. What should the husband do in such a case? Divorce her and marry another woman? As under monogamy he cannot have more than one wife under any circumstances. This is surely unjust and inhuman. Should he pay lip service to monogamy and have sex relation out of wedlock. That would be highly sinful, besides wasting energy and money outside and contracting diseases. Polygamy is the only honourable way to meet such a contingency.
4. It is a biologically known fact that in some men abnormal virility is found. If these men are denied polygamy, they would certainly inflict cruelty on their spouses and seek, in addition, illegal sex-gratification outside marriage. This goes to show that man is polygamous by nature and woman is monogamous. A single experience of sexual relation

leaves a lasting effect on a woman. The man, however, remains unaffected. This shows that Nature seems to restrict the movement of a woman to one man. The biological fact is that the consequence of natural coitus has far greater significance for the women than for the men. "Thus her responsibility towards herself is far greater and the rules she must make for herself in these matters must be far more rigid than the duties entailed by sexual questions on man." For this simple reason, polygamy has almost always been in vogue.

5. The sex urge in man is perennial but the woman (wife) is not available for sex all the time. Apart from the three to ten days of menstrual period every month in which sex relations are not permissible in *Shari'ah* besides being medically harmful, it may be equally harmful to have sexual relation with a wife during advanced pregnancy till child birth, and a certain post parturition period. There are men who find it difficult to control themselves for such long periods. They must be allowed polygamy or their misconduct must be condoned. The latter being out of the question, Islam judiciously permits polygamy.
6. Most men would like to marry virgins. Widows, divorcees and even poor spinsters (poverty tarnishes chastity) are not readily acceptable in marriage to many. Is it not wise for these unfortunate women to propose to well-settled, married but righteous men who are willing to accept them? Polygamy would solve this very pathetic problem for the hard hit women as well as their children born of their previous husbands.

7. Parents naturally desire a suitable match for their daughters. If they fail to find one, they would rather prefer in that situation to give their daughter in marriage to a good man, even though married. Under monogamy these innocent girls must either go to worthless bachelors or remain spinsters. Escape from both these unpleasant alternatives is available to only a legally polygamous society.

It needs to be realised that secret promiscuous connections, social indecencies and moral crimes can be effectively checked by the introduction of polygamy for the welfare of the society. If physical preservation is necessary, moral preservation is no less essential. On every prohibition of polygamy there has been a spurt in prostitution, adultery etc. Polygamy may go a long way in discouraging prostitution, adultery and fornication etc. Cutting across the current of nature is always harmful and replete with dreadful consequence. But those enamoured of West, in their zeal to champion monogamy overlook these matters that go to disturb the entire social set-up. This criminal disregard and irresponsible attitude are explained by the purely materialistic approach of the West to life and its problems. Polygamy appears to them to be a crude surrender to see passion and therefore a more materialistic approach to sex than is monogamy. A little reflection reveals that it is the other way round. Sex urge, for these "moderns" is merely a biological need and it can be satisfied without accepting severe responsibilities of marriage and family. With the ban on polygamy and acceptance of permissive sex, the West and its camp followers stand today on the brink of a crisis — internal turmoil, disjointedness of social relations. Obstructing the natural flow of water causes stagnation and putrefaction. The ethical bankruptcy and sex crisis of the West is traceable to this cutting across the current. Flourishing prostitution has

filled gap created by the abolition of polygamy. According to Ben Lindsey*, there are fifty thousand concubines and fifteen millions of abortions every year in the city of New York alone, apart from the incidence of rape at the rate of one per minute.

A full appreciation of Islamic polygamy is not possible without contrasting it with the vehemently advocated theory and practice of monogamy by the advocates of Westernisation. However, on polygamy as a social institution in Islam is repulsive and reprehensible to the modernists who in order to satisfy their lust, develop closer acquaintances with several women in the name of liberty and equality. These champions of modern civilisation recognise no moral scruples about sex but shirk the responsibilities of marriage hence promiscuity is on the rampage among those afflicted by the Western concepts. Women are hooked with the bait of ingenious propaganda couched in pleasant words. By instilling in the minds of women the false idea of equality, these moral wrecks have blinded them not only to justice but also to reason and pragmatic considerations. Women allowed their emotions to get exploited and their honour cast to winds. Woman will see the truth if they coolly probe this vicious propaganda, its hollowness and the ulterior motives behind it.

There is no denying the fact that Allah permits polygamy. To forbid it is to deny ourselves that Allah and His Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam) have allowed us. The determination of *Hurmat* (unlawfulness) *Hillat* (lawfulness) has not been left to the discretion of man. Allah Himself has legislated for man and pronounced His injunctions in unmistakable terms. Admonishing Bani Israel Allah says:

*Ben Lindsey, *Revolt of Modern Youth*.

"All food was lawful unto the children of Israel, save that which Israel forbade themselves, (in the day) before the Torah was revealed. Say: Produce the Torah and read it (unto us) if ye are truthful. (Qur'an, 3: 93)

The Qur'an reads in another place:

"O ye who believe! forbid not the good things which Allah hath made lawful for you, and transgress not. Lo! Allah loveth not transgressors." (5: 78)

Declaring polygamy unlawful is, therefore, equivalent to revolting against Allah and the Holy Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam). To quote the Holy Qur'an:

"And if ye fear that ye will not deal fairly by the orphans, marry of the women who seem good to you, two or three or four, and if ye fear that ye cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess. Thus it is more likely that you will not do injustice." (4: 3)

And again;

"Ye will not able to deal equally between (your) wives, however, much ye wish (to do so). But turn not altogether away (from one), leaving her in suspense. If ye do good and keep from evil, lo! Allah is Ever Forgiving, Merciful." (4: 129)

Those who condemn polygamy argue that the above verses far from permitting polygamy make it virtually impracticable in order to abolish this institution. Had it been so, Allah would have given a clean mandate to abolish polygamy if He had wished so, as He did in the case of slavery. He exhorted the Muslims to abolish slavery gradually and earn God's pleasure and moral loftiness. Releasing slaves was made *Kaffarah* (expiation) for various acts of omission. The fact remains that no steps were

taken against polygamy and, to the extent of four wives, polygamy continued as an institution.

The Holy Qur'an and Hadis frequently urge men to do justice to women. One Hadis reported by Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*), says that Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) had observed that if any man has two wives and if he has not treated them justly, then on the Day of Judgement, he will be raised as a truncated man, devoid of the (lower) half of his body. (Tirmizi)

Some think that this Hadis discourages polygamy because doing justice to two or more wives is impossible. One must remember that Islam is a practical religion and it does not enjoin the impossible on its followers. Were it impossible to do justice to two or more wives, an explicit ban would have been placed on polygamy. The earliest Muslims, whose sincere adherence to faith is beyond question, did practise polygamy as permitted. Had they not maintained justice among their wives, the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) would have admonished them. Nor is it reasonable to say that, while the early Muslims could be just, today's Muslims cannot, because of the low ebb of their *Iman*. The present-day world claims to be more alive to the needs of equality and justice. Why should it be more difficult for a God-fearing Muslim today to be just to his wives?

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) used to have turns among his wives and do justice. Aisha (*Raziallahu Anha*) reported that he (*i.e.*, the Holy Prophet) used to say:

"O Allah this is my division in what I can control. So don't blame me in what Thou dost control about what I cannot control." (Tirmizi, Abu Daud, Ibn Majah)

Similarly the women are expected not to become unnecessarily jealous of their own sisters and hatch plots against them.

Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"No woman shall seek the divorce of her sister (co-wife) to make her cup empty and then to get married what has been predestined for her."

(Bukhari & Muslim)

The injunctions of Islam are tended for the benefit of the human race in all ages and climes. Here mention may be made of Sr. Maryam Jameelah, a Jewish convert to Islam from U.S.A. and an accomplished writer who preferred to marry a Pakistani gentleman already married having several children although she could have easily married a bachelor of good fortune. But she did it merely to prove the efficacy of Islamic institutions. What a great sacrifice and self-denial. Our sisters can well derive inspirations from her noble example and desist from campaigning against polygamy which provides a dependable and worthy solution to the complex problems of modern society.

"The man is by nature polygamous", says Will Durant, "and that only the strongest moral sanctions, a helpful degree of poverty, and hard work and uninterrupted wifely supervision can induce him to monogamy" (*The Story of Civilisation*, Part V, p. 575). Moreover, there are circumstances both individual and social which make polygamy quite essential, e.g., the preponderance of females over males, supervision of widows and their children. Legitimate sexual needs of a man may also impel him to resort to polygamy. If the society is to be saved from adultery, promiscuity and immorality, then law and custom

must take a realistic view of man's nature and his genuine needs. One may say anything about polygamy, but there is no denying the fact that prostitution and keeping of mistresses, the great evils of modern civilisation with their concomitant of illegitimate children — is practically unknown to the countries where the institution of polygamy was adopted.

Islam by permitting the Muslims to marry four women has put a check on the unrestrained polygamy which had been practised at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). Moreover, it has purged this institution of all unhealthy practices and made it obligatory for a person having more than one wife to observe equity and justice amongst them, and if he is unable to do so, he should remain content with one wife only.

For Muslims, monogamy is the ideal, polygamy the concession to human nature. Polygamy is of the nature of some men in all countries, and of all men in some countries. Whether monogamy or polygamy should prevail in a particular country or a period is a matter of social and economic convenience but the permission (for polygamy) remains for all times to come, of course contingent upon the condition laid down in the Holy Qur'an and *Sunnah* as already explained.

A CLARIFICATION REGARDING THE POSITION OF CAPTIVE WOMEN IN ISLAM

Bahaz bin Hakim (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

"Protect your private parts except from your wife or what your right hand possesses."

(Tirmizi, Abu Daud & Ibn Majah)

This is stated in the Qur'an thus:

"And all married women (are forbidden unto you save those captives) whom your right hand possesses. It is a decree of Allah for you." (4: 24)

The term *muhsna* used in the above verse signifies literally "a woman who is fortified (against unchastity)," and is used in three senses: (1) married woman, (2) a chaste woman, and (3) a free woman. According to almost all the authorities, the term *al-muhsanat* denotes in the above context married women. As for the expression *malakat aymanukum* (those whom your right hands possess) denotes slave-girls, i.e., women who were captured in the holy war. When women are taken captive, their previous marriage is automatically annulled. It should, however, be remembered that sexual intercourse with these women is lawful with certain conditions:

- (a). No one is allowed to have sexual intercourse before the expiry of one period of menses in order to ensure that she has no conception or in case of pregnancy this is allowed after the delivery of the child.
- (b). The Muslims are not permitted to have sexual intercourse indiscriminately after they captured. They can do it only after they are properly delivered to their charge by the head of the Islamic State or someone else on his behalf.
- (c). One to whom the captive woman is entrusted is allowed to have sexual intercourse with her and none else is authorised to do so.

The children born of her would be treated as legitimate children having the same rights other children born of free women. After the birth of the child her hus-

band would not be allowed to sell her to any other man and on the death of husband she would automatically attain the status of a free woman.

Here we should also clearly understand the nature of slavery in Islam. It should be remembered that in Islam all types of slavery are unlawful except that of war prisoners and that even in such circumstances when no reasonable way can be found out for granting them liberty. So far as the slave traffic is concerned, i.e., catching hold of the helpless people, and then selling them in the market, the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) has clearly stated:

"He who would sell a free man by laying hold on him, I would myself be a claimant against him on the Day of Resurrection."
(Bukhari)

Even in case of war prisoners the Qur'an recommends to set them free either as a favour or for ransom.

"Then, when you overcome them, make (them) prisoners and afterwards (set them free) as a favour or for ransom"
(47: 4)

Now, if the circumstances are such that the Muslim society can neither afford to set them free, nor are the enemies prepared to pay ransom for securing their freedom, nor is there any provision in international law for the exchange of prisoners, then the only alternative left for the Islamic State is either to confine them in concentration camps or to make suitable arrangements for absorbing them in the Muslim society as respectable human beings. Islam adopts the last and the best course. The slaves are allocated to different families and they are exhorted to treat these captives as members of their families. They have unalienable rights. The same treatment is accorded to the slave-woman.

Besides all these facilities, Islam gives the slaves the right to secure their freedom by making extra earning during their leisure hours. Then the Muslims are exhorted to set their slaves free, and this is considered as an enviable act of goodness and piety. Moreover, there are various sins which can be expiated through freeing the slaves. All these facts go to prove that Islam does not like to keep the institution of slavery as a matter of routine in society. It is permitted in unusual circumstances and that too with conditions which go a long way in preserving the dignity of man and safeguarding his rights as a human being. Then Islam not only exhorts its followers to set the slaves free as an act of religious piety, but finds out other ways to secure liberty for them.

The Holy Qur'an says:

"Ah, what will convey unto thee what the Ascent is! — (It is) to free a slave, and to feed in the day of hunger an orphan near of kin, or some poor wretch in misery, and to be of those who believe and exhort one another to perseverance and exhort one another to piety."

(90: 12-17)

At another place we read:

"And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation) write it for them if ye are aware of aught of good in them, and bestow upon them of the wealth of Allah which He hath bestowed upon you." (24: 33)

What a great revolution in the institution of slavery! The practice of the master making such a contract with the slave prevailed before the advent of Islam, but the important reform introduced by Islam was that when a slave desired such a contract to be made, the master could not refuse it. Not only this but the Muslim society was exhorted to make payment on behalf of the slave to secure

freedom for him and as such the duty was imposed upon the State to spend a part of *Zakat* for this purpose. Verse 60 of *Surah Taubah* says:

"The Zakat is only for the poor and the needy and those who collect them, and those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and to free the captives and the debtors, and (for) the wayfarer; a duty imposed by Allah. Allah is all-knowing, Wise." (Qur'an, 9: 60)

Mu'az bin Jabal (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said to him:

"O Mu'az: Allah created nothing on the face of the earth more dear to Him than emancipation (of slaves) and Allah created nothing on the face of the earth more disliking to Him than divorce." (Darqutni)

From the foregoing account it would be seen that, except in case of war prisoners, all other types of slavery are forbidden in Islam. But even in the case of captives of war Islam has enjoined upon the Muslims to treat them well and feed and clothe them properly and not burden them with work which is beyond their capacity. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) exhorted his followers to set the slave-women free and arrange their marriage with other members of the society or with their own slaves if they so desire. He said:

"Any person who has a slave woman with him, and he educates her, teaches her good manners, then sets her free and contracts marriage with her is entitled to double reward." (Bukhari)

Can history furnish any other example of such a benevolent treatment being accorded to war captives?

LOT OF WOMAN IN THE WEST

The Western society, standing on the exaggerated ideal of equality between man and woman, has instead of improving the status of woman actually degraded her to the status of concubines, mistresses and society butterflies who are employed, as mere tools of pleasure seekers and sex marketeers, hidden behind the colourful screen of art and culture. According to recent statistics, in some Western countries 60% children born are illegitimate. And this in spite of modern birth control tactics. The Western women, in their unnatural desire and effort to be the equals of men, have forgotten that motherhood is their greatest privilege and highest honour. The woman who passes most her life in providing attraction and amusement for men, who neglects her home affairs and household duties, who cannot look after children and is unwilling to suffer the discomforts which home life and the rearing of children must necessarily involve, is positively a hateful creature. The respect for women can never spring from their exhibition of bodily charms and entertaining manners. It is only when women prove themselves good daughters, good wives, and good mothers that they can earn the respect of man. The so-called respect shown to them in Western society is unreal, since it is founded on lewdness and licence for unrestricted freedom rather than on the realisation of their important role as mothers and guardians of the race.

This industrial age has turned woman into a piece of merchandise. No advertisement is eye-catching unless it has a woman's body in it, exposed to various degrees of nudity. Films and television are a flop unless they have sex appeal, and plenty of it. Magazines and books flourish on the lustful desire of man, by providing a lot of erotic

material in written word and printed photos. Hotels and restaurants, in bygone days, used to boast of their excellent food and superb service. Now they arrange dances and striptease performances to satisfy their customers. Commercial firms expressly request that their receptionists must have a "presentable appearance." Even in political life a modest wife is considered a liability!

Woman has been selling her body since time immemorial. But never before was shamelessness given the littering label of "art". Never before was immodesty the accepted norm of life. It is in this age that woman has lost her sense of self-respect. There was a time when she was a coveted prize, to be pursued by man. Now she has put herself in a show window. No more is she a hidden treasure to be discovered by her rightful husband. She is now a piece of ornament to be seen, selected and admired at every shop.

This hoax has been given a blinding name, "Freedom of woman". But it is man, not woman, who has made himself free to exploit the woman in every conceivable manner. Now in the name of freedom, she has been persuaded to discard all "superfluous cloth" and appear in public in bikini for the gratification of man's lustful desire.

In the last century, when the Westerners penetrated the heart of Africa, they found some tribes who were roaming naked. Those pioneers of "civilisation" forced the tribes to wear clothes. Now those very advocates of civilisation are themselves discarding their clothes. One often wonders of the "primitive tribes" of the last century that were not more civilised than the rest of the world. After all, it is the rest of the world which is now imitating the ways of that "primitive society".

Today, the Western mode of dress is following a determined path aimed at securing maximum exhibition of the sexual parts. The present disgraceful trend of nudity is the crown of immorality and immodesty. The types of dress designed by the Western mind are chiefly for the purposes of illegal sexual allurements. The Western mode of dress has been responsible for so much sexual crimes that even responsible Westerners are viewing this with alarm and consternation.

Islam prescribed a certain kind of dress which women have to adopt in order to guard themselves and members of the opposite sex from sexual temptation. The fashion of dress designed by Islam is intended to offer the utmost protection to woman and to safeguard her chastity. The Western way of dress is repugnant not only to Islam, but to all sane Westerners also.

Let me quote here Sr. Maryam Jameelah, a convert to Islam, who originally hails from U.S.A.:

“After embracing Islam in America in the spring of 1961 I took great care to dress as plainly and modestly as possible under the circumstances without making myself look too queer or conspicuous to others; discontinued the wearing of all jewellery, lipstick and other cosmetics which I had previously used to please my parents and did not mix up socially with the opposite sex, however, I did not and could not wear *burqa* (an over dress for women mostly used in the Indo-Pak subcontinent) and did hold discussions with the opposite sex about Islam and deal with men for business purposes. I assumed the wearing of the *burqa* immediately after my arrival in Pakistan in 1969 and still put it on whenever I find it necessary to go out. *Without my burqa out-of-doors, I would feel naked!* However, since

we have no servants in the house, I am sometimes compelled by necessity to go and fetch things in the local bazaar for my needs. I also go out to visit female friends in the neighbourhood.

"I am a firm believer in *Purdah* because the superiority of Islam over other religions is that the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah do not only prohibit indecency and lewdness but all those things which lead to them and therefore the social segregation of the sexes is absolutely essential for the preservation of the Islamic cultural and moral structure. On the other hand, I also believe that *Purdah* has been for many centuries in India and Pakistan interpreted too strictly and rigidly by traditional orthodox families — far beyond the actual requirements of the *Shari'ah*. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) explicitly allowed women to go outdoors to attend to their needs provided they observed proper dress and conduct. The *Hadis* clearly permit women to attend the Mosque although it is preferable for them to pray at home. After women have fulfilled their obligations in the house, it is quite permissible according to the *Shari'ah* for them to visit female relations and friends, especially marriage parties and condolence calls."

In order to preserve the moral dignity and decency of its adherents Islam has even strictly forbidden women to apply perfumes while going out. Says the Holy Prophet:

"A woman who applies perfume and goes to a gathering is like an adulteress." (Abu Dawood, Tirmizi)

This prohibition is not without any rhyme or reason. Our so-called modern protagonists of sexual infidelity may jeer at the restrictions instituted by Islam. Islam is a Divine code of law; hence, it has not overlooked any as-

pect of life. The noble Prophet was divinely illumined; hence, he was fully acquainted with each and every aspect of sex psychology. And there is no denying the fact that perfumes having pungent smell are an important sex-stimulant.

Aisha (*Raziallahu Anho*), reported that Asma, the Daughter of Abu Bakr (*Raziallahu Anho*) entered while she had on her transparent clothing. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) turned away from her and exclaimed:

"O Asma! Verily, when a girl attains puberty then it is not proper that any portion (of her body) should be seen excepting the palms and the face." (Abu Dawood)

Hafsa (*Raziallahu Anho*) the daughter of Abdur Rehman (*Raziallahu Anho*) once visited Aisha (*Raziallahu Anho*) whilst she (Hafsa) was donning a transparent scarf. Aisha (*Raziallahu Anho*) tore the scarf from Hafsa (*Raziallahu Anho*) and gave her a scarf which was made from thick cloth.

(Mishkat, Malik)

The concept of modesty in Islam is so lofty that Islam directs that even man should not wear shorts or participate in swimming galas in a bare fashion (i.e., only wearing swimming suits, which expose their thighs)

Muhammad bin Jahsh (*Raziallahu Anho*) reports that the Messenger of Allah passed by Ma'mar (*Raziallahu Anho*) while his thighs were exposed. He said: *O Ma'mar, Cover Your Thighs, And Verily The Thighs Are Private Parts.*

(Mishkaat – Sharhe Sunnat)

Ali (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) said:

"O Ali! Do not keep your thigh exposed, and do not look at the thigh of any living man; or dead man."

(Mishkat, Abu Dawood, Ibn Majah)

A learned theologian gives the following definition of "private parts":

"Private parts have thus been defined: The parts of the person which are indecent to expose in man are what is between the navel and the knee for a male, and the entire body for a female except the face and the hands as far as the wrists." (Al-Hadis, Vol., p. 453)

Indeed, this definition of "private parts" may not be palatable to one who regards "sexual organs" only as private parts! Today the naked display of woman especially by female is considered to be an inextricable part of "modern" or the so-called civilised society. Islam however in sharp contrast to the trends of modern civilisation directs even the husband to conduct himself with decorum and refrain from exhibiting acts of the lowly beasts.

From what has been said above with regard to the restrictions placed by Islam on the dress to be adopted by its followers, it can be clearly discerned that Islam vehemently opposes the animal nudity of the "modern" society of our present day. It (Islam) is also drastically opposed to the doctrines underlying the Western society viz.

1. The so-called equality between the male and the female which is a complete farce. This slogan is invented only to lead woman astray and make them unmindful of their natural functions on the performance of which depends the very existence of human race and civilisation.
2. Economic independence of woman which in actual practice has made her independent of man and the great time honoured principle of "Man for the field and woman for the hearth", has been flung to the

winds. Obviously the mere satisfaction of the sexual desire is not a thing that can tie the male and female together for a life long companionship and compel them to live a family life with common interests. Why should a woman who wins her bread, supports herself economically and does not depend on anyone for security and maintenance, remain faithfully attached to one man only for the sake of satisfying her sexual desire?

3. The free intermingling of the sexes which has brought in its wake an ever-growing tendency towards showing off, nudeness and sex perversion. Sexual attraction which naturally exists between the sexes as a strong instinctive urge becomes all too powerful, even rebellious, to transgress all limits with every impetus it receives from the free intermingling of the men and women. This freedom of mixing together naturally gives rise to an urge to appear as attractive to the opposite sex as possible. In the absence of any moral restraint this urge is satisfied with increasing lust and both the sexes begin to show off and display their physical charms without any consideration for decency. This tendency later develops into illegitimate sex relationship. Such is the condition of the Western civilisation today.

No nation in the past has survived in the face of promiscuous relations. It destroys all the mental and physical capabilities of man that Allah has endowed him with for his well-being and prosperity. Obviously the people who are surrounded by sex stimulants on all sides, who have to face a new temptation and a new dazzling beauty every moment, who are submerged in an emotionally wrought up environment, and who perpetually remain

in a feverish condition on account of nude pictures, cheap literature, exciting songs, emotionally erotic dances, romantic films, highly disturbing scenes of obscenity and ever present chances of encountering and seducing members of the opposite sex, cannot possibly find that peace of mind and tranquillity of heart that is so essential for constructive and creative work. More than that such an environment that prevails in the Western world today is not at all conducive to that calm and peaceful atmosphere which is essential for the full development of the mental and moral qualities of the coming generations:

May Allah save us from the floodgates of sex, immorality and drunkenness into which the Western society has driven itself. Ameen!

CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES

Islam believes in the principle of the division of labour. It allots the strenuous work and the rough outdoor life to man and makes him responsible for the maintenance of the family. It regards home as the first concern of woman. It allots the work of managing the home and of upbringing and training of children to woman, a work which forms the most important item in the task of nation building. It exhorts her to engage herself in the cultivation of learning and allows her to participate, if necessary, in social uplift. The life of the office and factory, it considers as uncongenial and unnatural for her, and is emphatic in its demands that woman should in no case step into the shoes of man, nor should man encroach upon her sphere of activity. Both should work in a spirit of harmony, sympathy and love. Protection of the woman's modesty, chastity and honour, in short is the central core of Islamic teachings.

Now if we turn to the Muslim countries, we see that the Islamic demand for the separation of the sexes, for modesty, for purity, for chastity and for moral decency is being nakedly abused under the flimsy and baseless pretext of "equality of the sexes" which is nothing but a carnal ruse to lure men and women into the pits of unbridled sexual desire and lust. One of the direct causes of adultery and fornication in our society today is the free intermingling of the sexes. Immodesty, immorality, illegitimacy, strained husband-wife relations and divorce cases, all result from this baneful practice. That is why Islam strongly disapproves of any social pattern which desires women to neglect their primary and essential functions (of serving the husband, rearing the children and looking after the household affairs) and indulge in other activities which cannot but be highly detrimental to their primary duties.

In Islam segregation of the sexes is strictly enforced, even in religious worship and prayer, which are the highest duties of Muslim men and women. How simple is then to understand that if Islam has banned men and women mixing even in prayer, then it is unthinkable that the intermingling of sexes (with its accompaniment of all the agents of vice), is permitted in other matters. The verses of the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) leave no doubt about the observance of *Hijab* (veil) and prohibition to roam about for fun and pastime.

Islam stands for purity of thought and action and urges upon its followers to uphold this ideal. The Holy Qur'an says:

"O Children of Adam! We have revealed unto you raiment to conceal your shame, and splendid vesture, but the raiment of restrain from evil, that is best. This is of

the revelation of Allah, that they may remember."

(7: 26)

The world of today, even in this 20th century, falls far short of this Islamic standard. Human intellectual development has not so far touched the mark set by Islam. Whatever rights the woman has been granted in the West have been granted to her not for her own sake but as if she was the man. The woman is still inferior in the Western eyes as she was in the past ages of ignorance. In the West a real genuine woman has yet to have respect as the queen of a home, the wife of a husband, the matron of children. The so-called respect that she enjoys today is in fact for her being the he-woman or the she-man who is physiologically a woman but mentally a man, and who pursues masculine activities in life. It can, therefore, be said without fear of contradiction that the West has not honoured the woman because of her basic functions and noble attributes but rather has exploited her wayward tendency to exhibitionism.

According to the Social System of Islam, a woman at the most can uncover her hands and face, in the house and can go out of her house for genuine needs after putting an overdress. But the Westerner Muslims take this last limit as their starting point. They set out from the point where Islam comes to halt, and transgress all limits of decency and modesty without hesitation. Not to speak of the hands and face, beautifully parted hair on the hand, bare arms to the shoulders, and semi-covered breasts are also displayed. Rest of bodily charms are so covered in gauzy attires as to satisfy the hungry sexual gaze of men. More than that, tastefully dressed wives, sisters and daughters in full make-up, are brought face-to-face with friends, not to speak of near relations, and are encouraged to mix freely and have good time with them in a manner and to

an extent unimaginable for a Muslim lady even in company of her real brother. Permission to leave the house that was conditional on genuine need and observance of perfect modesty and full covering of the body is being abused for licence to roam aimlessly on the road-side, stroll in the parks, visit hotels and go to pictures, in glamorous and transparent clothes that hardly cover their nakedness. The limited and conditional freedom that women had been allowed by Islam in matters other than home science is being used as argument to encourage the Muslim women to abandon home life and its responsibilities like the European women and make their lives miserable by running after political, economic, social, and other activities shoulder to shoulder with men.

If some people feel like adopting such a way of life, they should boldly do so and declare their desertion of Islam and its law unequivocally. This would indeed be the height of hypocrisy and dishonesty on their part if they openly adopted in the name of the Islam that system and way of life whose basic principles, objectives and practices have been condemned, one and all, as unlawful by the Holy Qur'an.

In this connection it would be appropriate to quote the following *ahadis*:

- (i) 'Abdullah bin Amr (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, "*Among the best of you are those who have the best character.*"
(Bukhari & Muslim)
- (ii) Uqba bin Aamir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, "*Avoid going in where women are.*" A man said, "*Messenger of Allah, tell me about the relatives of a woman's husband,*"

to which he replied, *"The relatives of a woman's husband are death."*¹ (Bukhari & Muslim)

- (iii) Hazrat Anas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying, *"The devil flows in a man like his blood."* (Bukhari & Muslim)

It is for this reason that Islam had advised its men to avoid going in where women are present. What a sound precautionary measure! Let us act upon it in the true spirit and see how many vices die their natural deaths.

- (iv) Hazrat Abu Hurairah (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying: *"A woman must not make a journey of a day and night unless she is accompanied by a man who is within the prohibited degrees."* (Bukhari & Muslim)

How our women then dare to undertake long journeys alone in quest of studies of abroad, pleasure trips or meeting distant relatives.

- (v) *"It is not permissible for a woman to look at the aurah of another woman."*
- (vi) ("Aurah" of a woman means the entire body of a woman besides her face and hands.)
- (vii) "He who touches the palm of a woman (shaking hand with a woman) will have burning coals placed on the palm of his hand on the Day of Qi-yamat."

Let the Muslim men and women reflect on this Hadis who freely shake hands with strange ladies/gentlemen so that they may be considered "progressive" — they are heedless of the torments in

1. The word "death" is used to indicate a strong prohibition the idea being that the free mixing of one's wife is fraught with dangers and it is, therefore, advisable to keep a check on that.

the life hereafter. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said, *"It is better that an iron rod be driven into your head than you touching a woman who is not lawful to you."*

- (viii) Jabar (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported from the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) who said: *"Don't visit women whose husbands are absent, because the devil runs through you like the circulation of blood...."* (Tirmizi)

It is evident from the many restrictions imposed by Islam on the movement, dress, speech etc. of men and women that it views with utmost disgust the joint participation of opposite sexes at social gatherings and other ceremonies. Yet, today, Muslims have taken it upon themselves to legalise mixed parties, picnics and other so-called cultural functions.

By doing so, they are only harming themselves and incurring the wrath of Allah and His Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). The Qur'an says:

- (i) *"Let those who malign Allah and His Messenger, (on account of their transgression), Allah hath cursed them in the world and the Hereafter, and hath prepared for them the doom of the disdained."* (33 : 57)

- (ii) *"Whoso transgresseth Allah's limits he verily wrongeth his soul."* (65 : 1)

- (iii) *"And who goeth further astray than he who followeth his lust without guidance from Allah. Lo! Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk."* (28 : 50)

Those who try to please people at the cost of the displeasure of Allah; not only Allah is wroth with them

but ultimately those very people (whom they sought to please) turn against them. This is the law of natural and would operate sooner or later.

The Islamic Shari'ah is not a departmental store that anything of interest is picked up, bought and used according to one's desires. It is a divinely chalked-out complete code which governs all aspects of life. The Holy Qur'an admonishes:

"Believe ye in part of the scripture and disbelieve ye in part thereof? And what is reward of those who do save ignominy in the life of the world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievèous doom. For Allah is not unaware of what ye do.
(2: 85)

The Almighty Lord has not left the Shari'ah subservient to the lustful desire of these misguided people. The Holy Qur'an says:

"And if the Truth had followed their desires, verily the heavens and the earth and whosoever is therein had been corrupted."
(23: 71)

"And lo! for the transgressors there will be an evil journey's end, Hell, where they will burn, an evil resting place."
(28: 56,57)

Should, therefore, the Muslim woman not try to be God-fearing and righteous? Should they not stay at home and rather love to go to mixed gatherings and be soft of speech with strangers so as to allure them? Should they not wear *Niqab* (veil) and instead go about displacing their decoration and fineries as was done in the days of 'Ignorance'? Should they be neglectful from offering prayers and paying *Zakat*? And should they not abstain from disobeying Allah and His Messenger? If the answer to these

questions is in the negative then they have no other course save that prescribed in the Holy Qur'an:

"And it becometh not a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affairs; and whoso is rebellious to Allah and His Messenger, he verily goeth astray in error manifest." (33: 36)

ZINA: SLIPPERY PATH TO HELL

Chastity is a great virtue in a man or a woman. A chaste woman is a great asset to a husband and a chaste husband to a woman. Unchastity in any form has been made unlawful by the Holy Qur'an. It says:

"My Lord has forbidden indecencies, such of them as are apparent and such as are concealed, and sin and wrongful oppression." (7: 33)

The Holy Qur'an further says that everyone will be destroyed except those who guard their private parts save in case of their wives and those whom their right hand possess — verses 29 and 30 of Surah *Al-Ma'arij* refer.

In order to check free intermingling of men and women, the following preventive measures have been taken by Islam:

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their ornament only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands...." (24: 30,31)

And the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) warned:

1. *"Paradise is unlawful for a husband who allows his wife/wives to flirt with others."*
2. *"Allah will not speak with an old fornicator on the Judgement Day."*
3. *"There is even fornication of limbs (i.e. eyes, ears, tongue, hands and feet)."*

Of all the passions — eyes, ear, tongue, belly and genital organs — sexual passion is the greatest. Passion of the belly is to take food gluttonously and from unlawful source. Passion of the tongue is to talk too much without necessity, to speak falsehood, to make fake promises and to tell by tongue what is not in heart. Passion of eyes is to see strange women with lust, passion of the mouth is to kiss strange women with lust, and the passion of genital organ is to have actual intercourse with a strange woman.

There is a story of three persons who went to a cave and by chance a huge stone (which completely blocked their outlet) shut them up. Each recalled his good works and prayed to Allah for rescue. One of them prayed that he fell in love with a girl and when he was actually between her two legs for sexual intercourse, he feared Allah and abstained from intercourse. For this reward, the stone removed itself from them. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

"As for him who feared to stand before his Lord and restrained his soul from lust, lo! the Garden (Paradise) will be his house."
(79: 40-41)

The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) told a group of *Sahabah*, who had returned from holy war, that

they have come from a lesser fight and have yet to fight the greatest battle (jihad-e-Akbar).

It was questioned: O Messenger of Allah! What is the greatest fight? He (the Holy Prophet) said: "*Fighting with passion.*" (Baihaqi)

Allah Subhanahu wa-Ta'ala says in the Holy Qur'an:

"And come not near to Zina."

The term "come not near" means to stay away from all such things and practices which lead to Zina – which are stepping-stones to fornication and adultery.

The agents of *Zina* on modern times are:

- (i) Free inter-mingling of sexes which excite sexual passions,
- (ii) Co-education which provides ample opportunities for boys and girls to develop illicit and pre-marital sex relations without the fear of conception due to birth-control pills,
- (iii) Immodest, tight and scanty dresses of women which are a great sex stimulant for the men,
- (iv) Music and dancing, which awake dormant sexual desire to new heights,
- (v) Television and cinema, which with their emphasis on illicit, depraved and bestial immorality, are the very negation of modesty and shame and are responsible for mounting crime wave,
- (vi) Alcoholism and drugs which sharpen sexual appetite beyond control and,
- (vii) Night clubs which (have assumed the role of prostitution dens) provide all the facilities for the final act....

Perhaps no sin is more rampant in the affluent Muslim circles than *Zina* (fornication and adultery). We

have already examined the roots of this widespread evil, which is assuming the proportions of an epidemic due to the mortal thrust of Western morality. It would now be worthwhile to quote some *ahadis*, which may serve a deterrent against this abomination:

1. "I (*i.e.*, Prophet) swear by Allah there is nothing which Allah so condemns as His male and female servants committing adultery."
2. "An act of fornication obliterates seventy years of worship."
3. "The life-span of a fornicator goes on the wane."
4. "*Zina* (fornication and adultery) makes man impoverished and destitute. And a fornicator loses the light (or glow) on his face."
5. "*Zina* brings in its wake such destitution which lasts for generations."
6. "Child is to be attributed to one on whose bed it is born, and stoning for a fornicator." (Muslim)
7. Akramah from Ibn Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Whomsoever you find doing the deed of the people of Lot (*i.e.*, sodomy and homosexuality), kill the doer and one on whom it is done." (Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)
8. Jabir (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: "Verily the most fearful of what I fear over my people is the action of the people of Lot." (Tirmizi & Ibn Majah)
9. Amr bin al-As (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: "There is no people among whom adultery becomes widespread but are overtaken with famine, and there is no

people among whom bribery becomes widespread but are overtaken with fear.” (Ahmad)

10. Abdullah bin Masud (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported Allah's Messenger as saying: "The blood of a Muslim, who testifies that there is no god but Allah and that I am Allah's Messenger, may not lawfully be shed but for one of three reasons: a life for a life; a married man who commits fornication; and one who turns aside from his religion and abandons the community." (Bukhari & Muslim)
11. "If a married man commits adultery with a married woman, both will be subjected to heavy torture and on the Day of Judgement, the husband of married woman (guilty of adultery) will take away the goods of the adulterer and all his sins will be heaped on the adulterer who will then be thrown in hell. This will happen only when the husband is unaware of the vice and impurity of his wife. If, however, he connives at the acts of immorality of his wife, then Paradise is forbidden for him. It is written on the gate of Paradise: verily this is the Abode of Supreme Delight but entry is forbidden to one who connives at the immoral deeds of his wife. The seven heavens and the earth curse him and the adulterer."

Those men who send their decorated wives, daughters or sisters to public places where strange men enjoy their beauty, they are also at par with the one who connives at the immorality of his wife.

12. Once in a state of spiritual trance the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) saw a great cave which was like an oven, with a narrow mouth and a large bottom filled with blazing fire. There were naked

men and women at the bottom of the oven who rose and fell with the flames. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) asked: "What is it?" The two angels who were with him answered: "These are adulterers and adulteresses;" (Bukhari)

13. Another Hadis of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) says: "Avoid fornication because it has six bad qualities: of these three are experienced in this world viz.: (a) Light and brightness vanishes from the face of the adulterer, (b) It brings in its wake poverty and misery, and (c) The span of life gets reduced. And the three experienced in Hereafter are: (a) Almighty Allah subjects him or her to His anger and displeasure, (b) He or she will be subjected to strict reckoning on the Day of Judgement, and (c) He or she will be cast to hell. Almighty Allah will then say to them that the thing they have sent forward is the most wicked and hateful."
14. Abu Huraira and Zaid bin Khalid al-Juhani (*Razialahu Anhum*) reported that one of the desert tribes came to Allah's Messenger and said: Messenger of Allah! I beg of you in the name of Allah that you pronounce judgement about me according to the Book of Allah. The second claimant who was wiser than him said: Well, decide amongst us according to the Book of Allah, but permit me (to say something). Thereupon Allah's Messenger said: Say. He said: My son was a servant in the house of this person and he committed adultery with his wife. I was informed that my son deserved stoning to death (as punishment for this offence). I gave one hundred goats and a slave-girl as ransom for this. I asked the scholars (if this could serve as

an expiation for this offence). They informed me that my son deserved one hundred lashes and exile for one year, and this woman deserved stoning (as she was married). Thereupon Allah's Messenger said: By Him in Whose Hand is my life, I will decide between you according to the Book of Allah. The slave-girl and the goats should be given back, and your son is to be punished with one hundred lashes and exile for one year. And, O Unais (bin Zuhak al-Aslami), go to this woman in the morning, and if she makes a confession, then stone her. He (the narrator) said: He went to her in the morning and she made a confession. And Allah's Messenger (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) made pronouncement about her and she was stoned to death." (Muslim)

According to the Islamic Shari'ah, adultery is a non-compoundable offence and no compromise is possible in the matter; hence the payment of ransom is invalid. As the boy was unmarried, he was awarded one hundred lashes and exiled for one year and the lady was stoned to death because she was married.

Exile implies that the offender should be banished from the habitation and this purpose can be served also by imprisonment.

15. Imran bin Husain (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that a woman from Juhaina came to Allah's Apostle and she had become pregnant because of adultery. She said: Allah's Apostle, I have done something for which (prescribed punishment) must be imposed upon me so impose that, Allah's Apostle called her master and said: Treat her well, and when she de-

livers, bring her to me. He did accordingly. Then Allah's Apostle pronounced judgement about her and her clothes were tied around her and then he commanded and she was stoned to death. He then prayed over her (dead body). Thereupon 'Umar (*Raziallahu Anho*) said to him: Allah's Messenger, you offer prayer for her, whereas she had committed adultery! Thereupon he said: She has made such a repentance that if it were to be divided among seventy men of Medina, it would be enough. Have you found any repentance better than this that she sacrificed her life for Allah, the Majestic?"

(Muslim)

Where can history furnish such an example of noble repentance, deep conviction in the existence of the Ever-seeing Almighty Lord, and a firm belief in the Hereafter, accountability of one's deeds before the Lord and reward and punishment in the next world? The woman from Juhaina preferred to suffer the pangs of stoning to death to the torments of Hell. The belief in Allah and the Hereafter is the bedrock on which the edifice of sublime morality is raised, the morality that makes man God-fearing in all moments of his existence and in all aspects of his personality.

16. 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas (*Raziallahu Anho*) reported that 'Umar bin Khattab (*Raziallahu Anho*) sat on the pulpit of Allah's Messenger and said: Verily Allah sent Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) with truth and He sent down the Book upon him, and the verse of stoning was included in what was sent down to him. We recited it, retained it in our memory and understood it. Allah's Messenger awarded the punishment of stoning to death (to the married

adulterer and adulteress) and, after him, we also awarded the punishment of stoning. I am afraid that, with the lapse of time, the people (may forget it) and may say: We do not find the punishment of stoning in the Book of Allah, and thus go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by Allah. Stoning is a duty laid down in Allah's Book for married men and women who commit adultery when proof is established, or if there is pregnancy, or a confession. (Muslim)

The prescribed punishment can be inflicted only when the offence has been established by four pious upright witnesses. Similarly, the confession is valid only when the man is making his confession without any external pressure and he has sane mind. The spirit of the Shari'ah shows that the benefit of doubt goes to the offender even if it is very slight. There is a *Hadis* of the Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) which sheds light on this spirit. He said: "Ward off the punishments as far as you find it possible to ward it off." There is another *Hadis* in which he is reported to have said: "Ward off the punishments from the Muslims as far as it lies in your power; if there is any other way-out (for the offender) to be let off, then let him off, for if the *Imam* commits error in forgiving, that is better than his error in inflicting punishment." (Tirmizi)

Fornication is morally the most heinous crime that a person can commit. The one who commits it in fact proves that his humanity has been overwhelmed by his animality and he is not fit to live as a virtuous member of the human society. The Qur'an condemns this abominable act which ruins families, destroys household peace and strikes at the roots of pure and pious living and prescribes

exemplary punishment for it. We read in Surah Bani Is-rael and An-Noor:

(i) *"And come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an evil way."* (17 : 32)

(ii) *"The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge ye each one of them (with) a hundred stripes, And let not pity for the twain withhold you from obedience to Allah, if ye believe Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of believers witness their punishment."* (24 : 2)

Had the above punishment meted out to the guilty in the Muslim society, this evil (which has assumed the dimensions of plague because of the onslaught of Western civilisation where chastity, the most precious jewel in a woman's crown of virtue, is given only a secondary place) would have been non-existent. But cinema, television and music etc. which fan animal passions have plunged the Muslim society head long in this evil so much so that to-day many of our young boys and girls have experience of sex life before marriage as contraceptives and loops etc. have removed the fear of pregnancy to a larger extent in the heart of virgin girls. This alarming state of affairs calls for crusade on our part to destroy the flood gates of sex which thrive in the name of art, culture, family planning and entertainment shows. The Holy Qur'an wants to nip these evils in the bud when it commands its followers:

"Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and be modest. That is purer for them. Lo! Allah is aware of what they do."

"And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their

own husbands or fathers or husband's fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment. And turn unto Allah together, O believers, in order that ye may succeed." (24: 30-31)

We should learn a lesson from the once mighty Roman Empire which was blown to pieces because of indulgence in wine and woman. The Holy Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) is reported to have said:

"I have not left behind a trial more injurious to man than woman." (Bukhari & Muslim)

This *Hadis* speak of bad and unchaste women. In presence of such women in the household, all peace and domestic happiness is lost and moral progress arrested. And in verse 14 of Surah *Al-Taghabun*, Allah exhorts:

"O ye who believe! Lo! among your wives and your children there are enemies for you, therefore, beware of them."

The Muslim parents should ensure that their offsprings get the right type of education and are brought up according to the Islamic traditions so that they are a source of light and guidance for others and not instruments of spreading vice and vulgarity.

The Holy Qur'an admonishes:

- (i) "O ye who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones." (66: 6)

- (ii) *"O ye who believe! Follow not the footsteps of the devil. Unto whomsoever followeth the footsteps of the devil, lo! he commandeth filthiness and wrong."*
(24: 21)
- (iii) *"Lo! Allah enjoineeth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you in order that ye may take heed."*
(16:90)
- (iv) *"(The faithful slaves of the Beneficent are) those who cry not unto any other god along with Allah, nor take the life which Allah hath forbidden save in (course of) justice, nor commit adultery – and whoso doeth this shall pay the penalty. The doom will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein disdained forever; save him who repenteth and believeth and doeth righteous work; as for such, Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds. Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful."*
(25: 68-70)

THE LAST WORD

From the foregoing account and above-quoted passages from the Holy Qur'an and of Hadis our womenfolk may see for themselves as to how much they have deviated from the teachings of Islam. The need of the hour is redress and reform but it is strange and surprising that neither in the past nor at present any organised movement is being launched for the reformation of womenfolk who constitute over 50% of the total Muslim population. Islamic renaissance is not possible unless and until proper arguments are made for the guidance of our women who should be made thoroughly conversant with Qur'an and *Sunnah* and taken to simple way of living. They should be taught that as wife, sister, mother and daughter they have to spend the 24 hours according to the commands of Allah and the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) who should be our 'model' in all walks of life. Our women should also derive inspiration from the pious lives of the wives of the Holy Prophet and instead of seeking jobs in offices and factories, they should acquire knowledge of Islam and go out to educate their less-fortunate sisters. That will earn for them the unfailing reward from their Lord. The scope of Da'wat (Tabligh) among the women is so vast that more and more educated and enthusiastic ladies imbued with the true spirit of Islam should enter this field and try to combat unhealthy social customs and traditions which are not in keeping with the teachings of Islam which stands for chaste living, austerity and cleanliness. Take for instance the un-Islamic and burden-some practice of dowry. This has ruined the economic well-being of most of our families. This should be discarded forthwith by arranging *Nikah* ceremony in Mosques to be attended only by near

relatives and close friends. The marriage ceremony in such bold but righteous way cannot cost more than Rs. 1000/- (\$ 25).

Another important field, which requires immediate attention, is the Arabic-cum-Islamic education of our children. Most of the outwardly pious people ignore this aspect to the moral and spiritual ruination of their children. This process should be checked by arranging Islamic education of the children at home. Besides, the women living in a locality should meet twice a week say on Monday and Thursday at one place in rotation and try to instruct and induce each other to give up ostentatious living, observe *purdah* (veil) and live up to the requirements of *Shari'ah*. If such a programme of action is chalked out on a collective basis, ignorance and vice, un-Islamic customs and traditions can be stamped out and way paved for peaceful and purposeful living. It should be realised that the real joy and happiness lies in an Islamic way of life. The Holy Qur'an says:

"Say: Lo! Allah sendeth whom He will astray and guideth unto Himself all who turn (unto Him), who have believed and whose hearts have rest in the remembrance of Allah. Verily in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest! Those who believe and do right: joy is for them, and bliss (their) journey's end."

(13: 27-29)

As the eternal religion of God, Islam offers the hope of salvation to men and women both in this world and in the next. Let us, therefore, redouble our efforts to spread the message of Islam in every part of the globe and back it up by following in our personal conduct the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the noble example set by the Holy Prophet. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

"Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the Messenger may be a witness against you." (2: 143)

I now close this anthology with memorable words from verses 71-72 of Surah *At-Taubah* which read:

"And the believers, men and women, are protecting friends of one another: they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, and they establish worship and they pay the poor-due and they obey Allah and His Messenger. As for these, Allah will have mercy on them. Lo! Allah is Mighty, Wise. Allah promiseth to the believers, men and women, Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide — blessed dwellings in Gardens of Eden. And — greater (far)! — acceptance from Allah. That is the supreme triumph." (9: 71-72)

APPENDIX

THE MUSLIM WOMAN'S DRESS

According to the Qur'an and the Sunnah¹

Gamal A. Badawi

INTRODUCTION

This topic deals with the Shari'ah on the code of dress for Muslim women. It is based mainly on the Qur'an (the Word of Allah) and the *Sunnah*¹ [the explanations, elaborations, and exemplary practices of Allah's chosen Messenger, Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*)].

To some, this law may be at variance with their *personal opinions* which, in turn, are greatly influenced by the practices, norms, and pressures which are alien to the spirit of Islam. The gravity of this issue extends beyond the laxity in practising Islam by Muslims in such *essential* matters as modesty. The issue is founded in the heart of belief and commitment to Allah.

To place one's personal opinions, feelings, or inclinations above or at the same level as the Law of Allah is

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1. This paper is based on Muhammad Nasiruddin Al-Albani's *Hijabul-Marat-il-Muslimah Fil Kitab Wassunnah*, 3rd Printing, Al-Maktab-ul-Islami, Beirut, Lebanon 1389 A.H. (1969).

Other sources checked include "tafseer" of the Qur'an including those by Ibn-Kaseer, Yusuf Ali, and Sayyid Qutb, authorities in Fiqh including Sayyid Sabiq's *Fiqh-us-sunnah* and Yusuf Al-Qarazawi's *Al-Halal Walharam Fil-Islam*, and reference on Hadis. *Mishkat-ul-Masabeeh*.

A distinction should be made between, (a) the acceptance of Allah's Word as true and supreme in itself while not succeeding to implement it fully in one's life hoping and trying to reach that goal, and (b) regarding one's own opinions or other social values and pressures as more valid than Allah's injunctions and trying to find various excuses to justify one's breaking of the law of Allah. It is the latter attitude which is not only blameworthy but akin to unbelief.

the ultimate of *human pride and vanity*. This means, in effect, that a mortal is responding to Allah's guidance, saying: "*O my Creator! Your Law is your Own opinion. I, (and many others who fully agree with me), also have my own opinion, feeling, and experience. I know best what is good for me here and now!*" This attitude is most fitting for unbelievers and hypocrites, never for a believer no matter how imperfect (all are!) he/she may be in implementing Islam in his/her life....

One basic requirement to be a true believer according to the Qur'an is to make one's opinions, feelings, and inclinations *subservient* to whatever Allah and His Messenger have decided:

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ
الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا
(القرآن، ٣٣: ٣٦)

"It is not fitting for a believer, man and woman, when a matter has been decided by God and His Apostle, to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys God and His Apostle, he is indeed on a clearly wrong path."
(Qur'an 33: 36)

To expose truth in an honest and straightforward way may *cause some unease even to good and sincere Muslims*. It may seem "safer" and "diplomatic" to avoid the issue altogether, or to present it in a "diluted" and "vague" way. It is even "safer" and more "diplomatic" to explicitly or implicitly condone one another's infractions, to help each other find excuses and to "rationalise" our

disobedience to Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala*. This attitude is neither new nor is it without consequences. As the Qur'an presents it:

لَعْنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُدَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ
ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ۔ كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ
لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ۔ (القرآن، ٧٩، ٧٨:٥)

"Curses were pronounced on those among the children of Israel who rejected faith, by the tongue of David and of Jesus the son of Mary: because they disobeyed and persisted in excesses."

"Nor did they (usually) forbid one another the iniquities which they committed: evil indeed were the deeds which they did."

(Qur'an 5: 78-79)

THE FIRST REQUIREMENT

Extent of Covering

The dress must cover the *whole body* except for the areas which are specifically exempted. The Holy Qur'an states:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَٰلِكَ أَرَادَ
لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ۔ وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ

أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَ يَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُدَيِّنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا
وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۖ وَلَا يُدَيِّنَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ
أَوْ آبَاءِ هُنَّ أَوْ آبَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ هُنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ
إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي أَخَوَاتِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَاءِ هُنَّ أَوْ مَا
مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ
الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَى عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ
لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يَخْفَيْنَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا
الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ۔ (القرآن، ٢٤: ٣١-٣٠)

"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And God is well acquainted with all that they do."

"And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons, their husbands' sons, their brothers or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or the slaves, whom their right hands possess, or male servants free of physical needs, or small children who have no sense of the shame of sex; and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye believers! Turn ye all together towards God, that ye may attain bliss." (24:30-31)

These verses contain, among other things, two main injunctions:

1. A Muslim woman should not display her beauty and adornment (*Zeenah*) except for "that which must ordinarily appear of it"². (*Ma Zahara Minha*), or "that which is apparent."³

The word (*Zeenah*)⁴ lends itself to two related meanings: (a) natural or *bodily beauty*,⁵ and, (b) acquired *adornment* such as rings, bracelets and clothes.

The part of *Zeenah* which is exempted from the above injunction was interpreted in two ways:

- (a). The face and the hands. This is the interpretation of the majority of the jurists, past and present.⁶ This interpretation is confirmed by Ijma' (consensus) that a Muslim woman is allowed by Islam to uncover her face and hands during pilgrimage and even during the prayers, while the rest of her body

2. Yusuf Ali, op. cit. P. 904.

3. M. M. Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an*, 25.

4. According to *Lisan-ul-Arab* (Dictionary of Arabic Language), the term *Zeenah* includes "all that which beautifies," quoted in (Mrs) Ne'mat Sidky, *Al-Tabarruj*, 17th Printing, Dar-ul-I'tisam, Egypt, 1975 pp. 20-21.

5. The term *Zeenah* is used in the Qur'an to refer to children, wealth, and natural beauty in Allah's creation. See example Qur'an 17: 47, 16: 8, 37: 6 and 3: 14.

6. This is the interpretation of Malik, Ash-Shafii, Abu Hanifa, and a version of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. See Al-Albani op. cit. pp. 41-42.

is regarded as *awrah* (that which should be covered).⁷ This interpretation is based on the authority of Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) especially the Hadis in which he says:

"...If the woman reaches the age of puberty, no (part of her body) should be seen but this — and he pointed to his face and hands. This hadis will be cited further under 'the third requirement.' "

- (b). Whatever appears of the woman's body due to *uncontrollable factors* such as the blowing of the wind, or *out of necessity* such as the bracelets or even the outer clothes themselves.⁸
2. The headcovers (*Khumur*) should be drawn over the neck slits (*Juyoob*). "Khumur" is the plural of the Arabic word "Khimar" which means a *head-cover*.⁹ "Juyoob" is the plural of the Arabic word "Jaiyb" (a derivative of "Jawb" or cutting) refers to

7. Al-Albani provides ample evidence that the covering of the face and hands is not required. Suffice it to say that the woman is allowed to uncover her face and hands during such spiritual acts as the prayers and pilgrimage. See pp. 25-46.
8. One weakness with this more stringent interpretation is that uncontrollable factors are automatically forgiven without any need for specification. The fact that Qur'an 24:31 exempts from all *Zeenah* that which is regarded as *Ma Zahara Minha* is itself an indication of a concession. This concession is confirmed by the Hadis (related to Asma'a) as will be seen in the discussion of the third requirement. See Al-Albani, *Ibid*, pp. 25-46.
9. According to Al-Albani, this meaning of "Khimar" was explained in such authorities as Ibn Al-Atheer's *Al-Nihayah* and *Tafseer Al-Hafiz Ibn-Katheer* and others. Al-Albani reports that he knows of no difference on this point. See Al-Albani, *Ibid*, pp. 33-34.

the *neck slit* (of the dress). This means that the headcover should be drawn so as to cover not only the hair, but it should also be drawn so as to cover the neck and to be extended so as to cover the bosom.

THE SECOND REQUIREMENT

Looseness

The dress must be loose enough so as *not to describe the shape of a woman's body*. This is consistent with the intent of the verses cited above (24: 30-31) and is surely a crucial aspect of hiding *Zeenah*. Even moderately tight clothes which cover the whole body to describe the shape of such attractive parts of the woman's body as the bustline, the waist, the buttocks, the back and the thighs. If these are not part of the natural beauty or *Zeenah*, what else is?

Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) received a thick garment as a gift. He gave it to Usama Ibn Zayd, who in turn gave it to his wife. When asked by the Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) why he did not wear it, Usama indicated that he gave it to his wife. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) then said to Usama "ask her to use a *gholalah* under it (the garment) for I fear that it (the garment) may show the size of bones."¹⁰ The word *gholalah* in Arabic means a thick *fabric* which is worn under the dress to prevent it from showing the shape of the body.

A highly desirable way of concealing the shape of the body is to wear a *cloak* over the garment. The Prophet

10. This Hadis appears in Musnad Ahmad, also in Al-Baihaqi, and is confirmed in other sources of Hadis such as Sunan Abu-Dawood. See Al-Albani, *Ibid.*, p. 59-63.

(*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*), however, indicated that if the woman's dress meets the Islamic standards, it suffices (without a cloak) even for the validity of prayers.¹¹

THE THIRD REQUIREMENT

Thickness

The dress should be thick enough so as *not to show the colour of the skin* it covers, or the shape of the body which it is supposed to hide.

The purpose of verse (24: 31) is to hide the Muslim women's body except *Ma Zahara Minha* (the face and hands). It is obvious that this purpose cannot be served if the dress is thin enough so as to reveal the colour of the skin or the shape or beauty of the body. This is eloquently explained by Prophet Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). "*In later (generations) of my Ummah there will be women who will be dressed but naked. On top of their heads (what looks) like camel humps. Curse them for they are truly cursed.*" In another version he added that they "*will not enter into Paradise or (even) get a smell of it.*"¹²

On one occasion Asma' a (daughter of Abu-Bakr) was visiting her sister Aa'isha, wife of the Prophet (*peace be upon him*). When he noted that Asma's dress was not thick enough, he turned his face away in anger and said:

*"If the woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen, but this, and he pointed to his face and his hands."*¹³

11. See Sayyid Sabiq's *Fiqh-us-Sunnah*, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Arab, Beirut, Lebanon, 1969, vol. 1, p. 127.

12. Al-Tabarani and Sahih Muslim. See al-Albani, op. cit., p. 56.

13. In another occasion when the Prophet (P) saw a bride in a thin dress he said, "she is not a woman who believes in Surat-

THE FOURTH REQUIREMENT

Over Appearance

The dress should not be such that it *attracts men's attention* to the woman's beauty. The Qur'an clearly prescribes requirements of the woman's dress for the purpose of concealing *Zeenah* (adornment). How could such *Zeenah* be concealed if the dress is designed in such a way that it attracts men's eyes to the woman?

This is why the Qur'an addressing the Holy Prophet's wives as the examples for Muslim women says:

(القرآن، ٣٣: ٣٣) وَلَا تَبْرَحْنَ تَبْرِجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَى-

"Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizenment of the of the Days of Ignorance..."¹⁴

Additional Requirements¹⁵

In addition to the above four main and clearly spelled-out requirements, there are some other requirements whose specific application may vary with time and

un-Noor who wears this" Surat-un-Noor is the chapter where the main requirements of the Muslim woman's dress are outlined. Still on another occasion some women from the tribe of Bani Tameem came to visit Aa'ishah in thin clothes. Upon seeing them, the Prophet (P) said, "if you are believers, then these are not believers' clothing." See Yusuf Al-Qarazawi. Op. cit.

14. The term used in the Qur'an is *tabarruj* which means displaying of beauty. Another derivative of *tabarruj* is *burooj* which is used in the Qur'an (e.g. 4: 77, 15: 16, 25: 61, 85: 1) *Burooj* means towers because of their clear visibility. Clear "visibility" of the woman may result from the type of dress, the way she walks, or the way she behaves.
15. According to Al-Albani, a further requirement is that the dress should not be perfumed. In fact, this requirement extends beyond dress. There are several Ahadis which make it

location. These include:

1. The dress should not be similar to that which is known to be a *male costume*. Ibn Abbas narrated that "The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) cursed the men who act like women and the women who act like men."¹⁶
2. It should not be similar to that which is known as the *costume of unbelievers*. This requirement is derived from the general rule of Shari'ah that Muslims should have their distinct personality and should differentiate their practices and appearance from unbelievers.¹⁷
3. It should not be a *dress of fame, pride and vanity*. Such fame may be sought by wearing an excessively fancy dress as a status symbol or an excessively ragged dress to gain other's admiration of one's selflessness. Both motives are improper by Islamic standards. The Prophet (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*) says:

*"Whoever wears a dress of fame in this world, Allah will clothe him with a dress of humility on the Day of Resurrection, then set it afire."*¹⁸

clearly forbidden for a Muslim woman to use perfumes when she goes out of her home even if she is going to the mosque. See Al-Albani, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-66.

16. For this and other Ahadis of the same nature see Al-Albani, *Ibid.*, pp. 66-99
17. For an excellent discussion of this principle on the basis of Qur'an and Sunnah, see Al-Albani, *Ibid.*, pp. 78-109.
18. For this and other versions of the Hadis see Al-Albani, *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

Requirements of Muslim Men's clothing

It should be noted that the basic requirements of the Muslim woman's dress apply as well to the Muslim man's clothing with the difference being mainly in degree. This can best be understood by looking into what Islam defines as '*Aurah*' which refers to the part of the body that should be covered at all times unless there is an expressed exception. The covering of '*Aurah*' is also a condition for the validity of Prayers for both men and women.

It has been agreed among jurists on the basis of Qur'an and Sunnah that '*Aurah*' for the woman is defined as the whole body except for the face and hands. For the man, the '*Aurah*' is defined as the area between the navel and the knees. There is some difference, however, among jurists as to whether the knees and the thighs should be included in the definition of the man's '*Aurah*'.¹⁹

Within the definition of '*Aurah*' for men and women, all the four basic requirements discussed in this paper are essentially the same:

1. Man should fully cover his '*Aurah*'.
2. Men's clothes should be loose enough so as not to describe what he is covering (his '*Aurah*').
3. They should be thick enough so as not to describe the colour of the skin in the parts which should be covered.
4. They should not be designed in a way which attracts attention to themselves. The basic rule of modesty and avoiding "showiness" applies to all believers — men and women.

19. For a good discussion on the evidence related to both views, see Sayyid Sabiq's *Fiqh-us-Sunnah*, op. cit., Vol. 1., pp. 125-127

The three other additional requirements discussed under the Muslim woman's code of dress apply to men's clothes as well:

1. They should not be similar to that which is known as a female costume.
2. They should not be similar to that which is known as the costume of unbelievers.
3. They should not be clothes of fame, pride and vanity.

In addition to the above limitations on the Muslim man's clothes, men are not allowed to wear silk and gold. This does not apply to women.

Conclusion

There are surely many other issues pertaining to the subjects that are not covered in this paper. Its main focus is on the *documented injunctions* of Allah as derived from His word (the Qur'an) and as explained by the chosen Messenger, Muhammad (*Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam*). Such injunctions or obligations are mainly and ultimately the responsibility of *each Muslim, man or woman* in the day when they will stand between the hands of Allah to give account of their lives here on earth. Truly husbands, fathers and mothers do have an obligation to remind, exhort and help each other achieve the pleasure of Allah and to avoid His wrath. In the final analysis, however, it is *not coercion or force* which is likely to bring about obedience to Allah. It is rather, the *love of Allah, the acceptance of His guidance* as the supreme truth even if contrary to one's personal opinion, and the commitment to close the gap between the present practice and the desirable standards set by Him.

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Finally, I have benefited from a number of books written by modernists or Western orientalists about Islam in their own peculiar style. I have learnt a great deal from their works although I do not share with their slanted views or agree with their findings being biased and prejudiced against Islam and its institutions, in most of the cases.